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**A CRITICAL INVESTIGATION INTO
THE DISCOURSE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY
IN SOUTH KOREA (1987-2017)**

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	1
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
DECLARATION.....	5
ABSTRACT	6
INTRODUCTION	7
ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS	8
CHAPTER ONE. APORIA OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY	14
1. INTRODUCTION	14
2. THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICALLY NEUTRAL EDUCATION	18
3. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF THE KOREAN USE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY	24
4. POSSIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY	29
5. IMPOSSIBILITY AND UNDESIRABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY	36
6. CONCLUSION.....	42
CHAPTER TWO. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS	45
1. INTRODUCTION	45
2. WAR-POLITICS AND THE CRISIS OF CRITICISM (1): KIM DONG-CHOON..	47
3. WAR-POLITICS AND THE CRISIS OF CRITICISM (2): FOUCAULT ON STATE RACISM.....	53
4. WAR-POLITICS IN A TIME OF NEO-LIBERALISM: FOUCAULT ON (NEO- LIBERAL) GOVERNMENTALITY	60
5. WAR-POLITICS AND RESISTANCE: FOUCAULT ON PARRHESIA.....	68
6. CONCLUSION.....	74
CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS.....	76
1. INTRODUCTION	76

2. POSITIONALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS	77
3. THE DISCOURSE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY	81
4. FAIRCLOUGH’S CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS	84
5. FOUCAULT’S GENEALOGY	88
6. DATA AND EVENTS.....	92
7. CONCLUSION.....	100

CHAPTER FOUR. THE DISCOURSE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY IN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS.....102

1. INTRODUCTION	102
2. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR.....	107
3. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING TEACHER (UNION)	115
4. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE.....	122
5. “CONTAMINATION”, “THREAT”, AND “PROTECTION”: THE METAPHORICAL CONSTRUCTION	126
6. CONCLUSION.....	132

CHAPTER FIVE. THE NEUTRALISATION OF TEACHERS135

1. INTRODUCTION	135
2. CRITICAL TEACHERS, UNIONS, AND NEUTRAL EDUCATION	139
3. THE REPRESSIVE STATE APPARATUS.....	143
4. THE QUALIFICATION TEST TRAP	151
5. NEO-LIBERAL EDUCATION REFORM AND INDIVIDUALISATION	157
6. CONCLUSION.....	166

CHAPTER SIX. THE NEUTRALISATION OF SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE170

1. INTRODUCTION	170
2. THE BIRTH OF THE NEW RIGHT	173
3. TEXTBOOK CERTIFICATION SYSTEM	181
4. THE ‘CORRECT’ HISTORY TEXTBOOK	187
5. CONCLUSION.....	193

CHAPTER SEVEN. PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE196

1. INTRODUCTION	196
2. PARRHESIA, WAR-POLITICS, AND NEUTRAL EDUCATION	200
3. TEACHERS' PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE.....	204
4. STUDENTS' PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE.....	211
5. CONCLUSION.....	217

CHAPTER EIGHT. CONCLUSION.....219

BIBLIOGRAPHY227

1. BOOKS AND ACADEMIC ARTICLES	227
2. NEWSPAPER ARTICLES AND EDITORIALS	250
3. GOVERNMENTAL DOCUMENTS AND OTHER REFERENCES	255

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own independent work, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. Also, this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

ABSTRACT

There has been a steady proliferation of discourses concerned with neutral education in South Korea since the democratisation of 1987. The problem of educational neutrality has been raised particularly by conservative forces. This thesis offers a critical examination of the conservative use of educational neutrality. Three inter-connected questions guide the thesis. First, what events and elements are combined in the discourse of educational neutrality in what ways? Second, how do non-discursive practices (e.g. techniques of power) help realise the discourse of educational neutrality? Finally, how do teachers and students resist pressure to be neutral?

In order to address these questions, by drawing on theoretical tools offered by Kim Dong-choon and Michel Foucault, I, first of all, contextualize the conservative use of educational neutrality in relation to war-politics where critical thought and action are punished and regulated in the name of protecting society. I then combine Critical Discourse Analysis with Foucault's genealogical approach in order to grasp multiple dimensions of the discourse of educational neutrality. The construction of the discourse of educational neutrality is investigated through an analysis of a conservative newspaper's editorials. The deployment of power techniques in the realization of the discourse of educational neutrality is examined through a genealogical study of how critical teachers' unions have been regulated and how history textbooks have been sanitised. Last but not least, I explore courageous speech activities carried out by teachers and students. Those speeches, as forms of resistance to the myth of neutral education, serve to introduce a break in war-politics that draws an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able.

The thesis concludes by highlighting that education cannot be reduced to the mere transmission of technical knowledge from teachers to students. Rather, education should take on the task of regenerating critical thought and action particularly in a pluralistic democratic society where different individuals, values, and views coexist not in an antagonistic way but in a harmonious way.

INTRODUCTION

Korean education has undergone rapid changes since liberation from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. In addition to an unprecedented increase in the number of schools, Korean students and teachers have consistently performed very well on international educational evaluations (Lee Gil-sang, 2015: 39-43; OECD, 2017). Also, Korean “education fever”, albeit extremely costly, has played a role in making Korean society a highly schoolised and literate society (Seth, 2002). Against this backdrop, many countries have become more interested in Korean education. For instance, former U.S. President Barack Obama praised the excellence of Korean education frequently in his speeches, and the BBC made several television documentaries on Korean education (Independent, 2015; BBC, 2016). Korean education companies now begin to export their educational products, which are called “K-Learning”, around the world (Edaily, 2016).

However, contrary to the bright side, this study concerns the dark side of Korean education. More specifically, I would argue that the remarkable achievement of Korean education could be made by turning a blind eye to one of the very important functions of education, that is, the political function of education. By the political function of education, I mean that education should serve to encourage both students and teachers as democratic citizens not only to critically reflect on heterogeneous and ‘messy’ social relations and problems but also to actively participate in the transformation of oppressive social conditions (Giroux, 1988; Lund & Carr, 2008). However, in South Korea, both teachers and students have to

take a risk of punishment in expressing their thoughts on social and political issues and to engage with them. Instead, they are forced only to prepare for the national college exam in the short term and for the competitive workforce in the long term.

In the study, I pay particular attention to the matter of educational neutrality. By drawing on a number of critical studies, I assume that the concept of educational neutrality has been utilised as an effective means to rid education of the political function. But, it should be mentioned at the outset that my intention is not to judge ‘neutrally’ what is and what is not neutral education. As critical scholars and even liberal neutralists claim, there is no such thing as purely neutral education (see Chapter One). The more important thing is neutrality-in-use. I thus investigate how the idea of neutral education has been used by whom under what socio-political contexts and its implications.

ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is organized as follows. In Chapter One, Aporia of Educational Neutrality, I provide background information on the issue of educational neutrality. I begin with an example of the Sewol ferry tragedy, in order to show how the concept of educational neutrality is controversially used in South Korea. Those who demand vehemently neutral education are conservative forces. They endeavour to seek out and eliminate the political from the field of education. The conservative use of educational neutrality is the main concern of the thesis. In the remaining sections of the chapter, I critically examine the existing literature on educational

neutrality. Whereas the idea of neutral education is widely supported within the tradition of liberalism, critical scholars persist with the impossibility as well as the undesirability of neutral education. I am largely in agreement that there is no such thing as a purely neutral education. However, the previous critical and educational literature has not taken account of the practical use of the concept of educational neutrality. Although there exist some studies of the Korean use of educational neutrality, they, however, suffer from a lack of systematic considerations.

In Chapter Two, Theoretical Frameworks, I develop an analytical framework through which to investigate the conservative use of educational neutrality within the wider social and political context. I particularly contextualize the matter of educational neutrality in relation to “war-politics” (Kim Dong-choon, 2013). War-politics is a Korean conservative ruling forces’ political strategy to restrict critical thought and action. This study is based on the assumption that an attempt to neutralize education is part of the conservatives’ attempts to shrink spaces for criticism. The framework of war-politics is supplemented by Foucault’s work. Kim Dong-choon’s work tends to focus on repressive aspects of war-politics and also pays little attention to the possibility of resistance. I consider Foucault’s work on state racism and (neo-liberal) governmentality as a tool with which to examine the oppressive and productive working of war-politics particularly in a time of neo-liberalism. In addition, following Foucault’s conception of parrhesia, I see courageous speeches delivered by teachers and students as forms of resistance to the myth of neutral education. They introduce a break in war-politics that draws an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able.

In Chapter Three, Methodology and Methods, I present the methods with which to address the concerns of this study. In the thesis, the use of educational neutrality is seen as a discursive phenomenon. Those who make the use of the concept of educational neutrality in any sense cannot avoid re-defining and re-contextualising the concept from the beginning to the end due to the ambiguity of the concept. Without doubt, language use plays a crucial role in the identification process of educational neutrality. However, not only are existing socio-political structures implicated in language use, but also discursive practices are inextricably interwoven with non-discursive practices. This is why I try to combine Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with Foucault's genealogical approach. CDA is "not interested in a linguistic unit per se" but interested in how texts, talks, and even visual images are socially constituted (Wodak & Meyer, 2009: 2). Yet, given that CDA remains attentive to text, Foucault's genealogy is more appropriate for analysing the role of techniques of power in the realization of the discourse of educational neutrality

In Chapter Four, The Discourse of Educational Neutrality in Newspaper Editorials, I analyse the data gathered from a conservative newspaper's editorials on educational neutrality. I particularly examine what events and elements are combined in what ways in the selected editorials. As assumed in Chapter Two, critical thought and action are the main concern of the editorials. On the one hand, they are described as too leftist, political, and even dangerous. On the other hand, they are also regarded as hindrances to raising competitiveness in a globalised world. The analysis here points to a mixture of war-political and neo-liberal rhetoric

or the neo-liberal transformation of war-politics in the discourse of educational neutrality. Additionally, I also pay attention to the use of negative metaphors in the editorials. Metaphors are deliberately chosen not only to make editorials' argument more persuasive but also to affect the way people act.

In Chapters Five and Six, I investigate the multiple forms of power being exercised through and with discourses regarding educational neutrality. Especially, Chapter Five, *The Neutralisation of Teachers*, focuses on the rise and fall of the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers Union (KTU). The KTU is at the heart of controversy over educational neutrality. As shown in the selected editorials in Chapter Four, it is a widely held view that not only are teachers 'faithful' public servants but also they teach 'immature' students. Trade union activities in conflict with the state in many cases are deemed as inappropriate for teachers. KTU teachers are expected to have a bias against the state and incite students. In this context, the KTU has been under constant attack by conservative forces. Laws that secure teacher neutrality, albeit vaguely, are used as direct grounds for punishing KTU teachers. Also, more liberal (individualizing) techniques of power have been introduced, producing the effect of neutralizing critical teachers.

In Chapter Six, *The Neutralisation of School Knowledge*, I go on to examine the workings of power in relation to neutral education. Whilst Chapter Five deals with the neutralising process of non-neutral educators, Chapter Six addresses the neutralising process of non-neutral school knowledge. It does so by tracing the history of controversy over history textbooks. Since the early 2000s when the 'new'

right began to emerge, existing history textbooks have been accused of their political bias by the conservatives. Conservative forces keep labelling the existing history textbooks as ‘left-wing textbooks’, and eventually, the conservative government of President Park Geun-hye decided to issue a single history textbook entitled the Correct History Textbook. The attempts to replace what Foucault calls “historico-political discourse” by ‘objective’ and ‘neutral’ facts only beneficial to the current social and economic situation can be read as war-political practices that emasculate the potential for critical thinking (Foucault, 2003: 49).

In Chapter Seven, Resistance, I explore courageous speech activities carried out by teachers and students. To speak publicly against the state is treated as a threat to society under the war-political circumstances. Hence, teachers and students take many risks to speak critically in the field of education. In the face of danger, however, a number of teachers and students are willing to speak publicly and critically against those in power. By drawing on Foucault’s work on “parrhesia”, I see courageous speech activities as forms of resistance that introduces a break in war-politics that draws an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able (Foucault, 2001).

In Chapter Eight, Conclusion, by drawing together the key findings of previous chapters, I highlight that the problem of educational neutrality in South Korea is not a matter of identifying what is genuinely neutral education or not. Rather, the use of educational neutrality is closely related to the wider social and political context of war-politics. Most of all, the neutralisation of education has the effect of

restricting the possibility of critical thinking and action, thereby preventing the emergence of the critical subject who plays an essential role in a pluralistic democratic society. Conversely, this implies that further study is required into alternative possibilities for going beyond the myth of neutral education.

CHAPTER ONE. APORIA OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY

Liberal neutrality is thought a plausible condition for legitimacy, educational neutrality is a plausible condition for legitimate state educational policy.

(Waldren, 2013: 74)

There are no neutral education systems. It is impossible for me to think about education without considering the question of power, of asking the question: In favor of whom or what do we promote education?

(Freire, 1990: 78)

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this introductory chapter is to contextualise the research by providing background information on the matter of educational neutrality. In this section, I, first of all, give an example of controversy over educational neutrality. The disputes over ways of mourning for victims of the Sewol ferry disaster in schools show explicitly what elements consist of the problem of educational neutrality. Through the example, I draw out three specific objects of this study; political neutrality of education, teacher neutrality, and neutral school knowledge. Section Two explores socio-historical contexts within which those types of educational neutrality could emerge as thorny issues. In Section Three, the existing literature on the Korean use of educational neutrality will be examined. However, given that there have been

very few studies of educational neutrality in South Korea, it seems worth reviewing more general theoretical issues regarding educational neutrality. In the second half of the chapter, I review two contrasting theoretical views of educational neutrality. Whereas the idea of neutral education is widely supported in liberalism, albeit in different ways (Section Four), critical scholars persist with the impossibility as well as the undesirability of educational neutrality (Section Five). In this study, I do not pretend to be ‘neutral’ about the matter of educational neutrality. Rather I am largely in agreement that purely neutral education is impossible and undesirable, which means I adopt critical perspectives. Yet, I would argue that critical scholars tend to neglect the practical use of educational neutrality, while assuming the impossibility of educational neutrality a priori. The last section therefore concludes by suggesting that it is necessary to see the matter of educational neutrality as a mixture of socio-political practices.

On 16th of April 2014, the Sewol ferry capsized off South Korea’s southwestern island of Jindo, and a total of 304 people died. Of the victims, 250 were Danwon high school students on a school trip to the Jeju island at that time. At the scene of the accident, the ship’s captain and many senior crew members fled the sinking ship on the first rescue boat, without taking proper rescue measures. Passengers aboard the ferry were only told “stay still” (CNN, 2014). Later, the captain of the Sewol ferry has received life imprisonment for irresponsibly abandoning the sinking ship and thus killing passengers. To date, it has been revealed that the Sewol ferry tragedy resulted from overloaded freight and excessive veering. There has been, however, much suspicion as to how the accident really happened (for example, see

Korea Herald, 2016). As well as the cause of the sinking, the government's poor response to the ferry accident caused much criticism. When President Park Geun-hye was finally impeached for corruption and cronyism by the unanimous decision of eight judges of the Constitutional Court on 10th of March 2017, two judges added, in terms of the ferry disaster, that she failed to carry out the president's constitutional duty to protect the right to life of citizens. Wider anger at the government and a growing sense of doubt about the state's *raison d'être* prevailed in the whole country after the Sewol ferry disaster.

Meanwhile, a great number of people started wearing yellow ribbons or wristbands as a symbol of sympathy for the victims, of solidarity with the families of the victims, and of hope for building a better society. However, a few months after the Sewol ferry accident, the Ministry of Education (MoE) instructed schools to prohibit teachers and students from wearing the yellow ribbon at school, saying that "wearing the yellow ribbon is not only to violate political neutrality of education but also to affect immature students who are vulnerable to biased perspectives" (MoE, 2014b; 2014c). Despite the explanation of the MoE that they were concerned that the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers Union (KTU) would force students to wear the yellow ribbon for a political purpose (MoE, 2014b; 2014c), the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has determined that the measure taken by the MoE infringed on freedom of expression (NHRC, 2015).

A similar controversy over the way of commemorating the Sewol ferry accident arose in 2016. The KTU published the 4.16 Textbook for Memory and Truth with

the intention of using it as a reference book for the Special Lesson¹ for the second anniversary of the Sewol ferry disaster. However, the MoE again banned the use of the textbook on the grounds that it “not only encourages students to have a negative view of their country but also contains a distortion of the facts and non-educational expressions” (MoE, 2016). Lee Young, vice-Minister of Education at the time, organised a meeting with vice-Superintendents of Education where he insisted that “the Special Lesson using inappropriate materials will bring about social conflicts”, and, above all, “it will undermine the constitutional principle of educational neutrality” (cited in Yonhapnews, 2016).

From the above examples, I pick out some of the specific issues. First, educational neutrality functions as a criterion for demarcating the boundaries between what is right and what is wrong educationally. To be more concrete, educational neutrality seems to regulate educational acts and knowledge that are deemed political. Political neutrality of education is indeed a key part of much debate about educational neutrality in South Korea. Second, it is also evident in the above cases that the KTU is seen as the main troublemaker in relation to educational neutrality. The MoE concerned about the KTU dealing with politically sensitive subjects in a political way in schools. However, from the perspective of the KTU, according to former leader of the KTU, the state uses educational neutrality as a way to transform teachers into “scarecrows obedient to political power” (Kim Jeong-hoon, 2014).

¹ The Special Lesson (*gyegisueob*, 제기수업) is to help students learn specific issues like terrorism and election which are not included in the national curriculum. In principle, what to teach and how to teach in the Special Lesson are at the discretion of individual schools, whereas in practice, there has been a high degree of state intervention in the Special Lesson (Cho Nam-gyu, 2016).

Third, educational neutrality becomes a matter particularly when teachers bring controversial issues like the Sewol ferry accident to the classroom. Conservative forces have demanded neutral and objective school knowledge. Even, they argue that controversy itself is dangerous. In the section to follow, through a historical overview of South Korean education, I try to clarify why political neutrality of education is central to the problem of educational neutrality and how it comes to be applied to teachers (union) and school knowledge.

2. THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICALLY NEUTRAL EDUCATION

Education has long been one of political instruments in South Korea. During the colonial period (1910-1945), education served as a vehicle for instilling imperialistic ideology into colonials to support the Japanese Empire. For instance, Koreans could not use the Korean language in schools and Korean history was removed from the curriculum (MoE, 2009: 17). Instead, Korean students had to swear an oath of allegiance to the Japanese Empire and learnt Japanese history (ibid.). Especially, in the wartime mobilisation of 1937-1945, the main goal of education was to train Korean students as workers for the colonial economy and soldiers for the Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War (Lee Gil-sang, 2007: 53-91). After Japanese occupation, the American military government (1945-1948) and the Rhee Syng-man government (1948-1960) mobilised education to spread anti-communism in particular. Under the Cold War system and the accompanying division of the Korean peninsula between the North and the South, the construction

of the anti-Soviet and anti-communist bloc became the most important task for the two governments (see Lee Seoung-won, 2008). The introduction of the Student Corps for National Defense, whose aim was to teach students anti-communism and military skills, was one of many attempts of the Rhee Syng-man government to transform education into a military camp against anti-communism (Im Chong-myong, 2012). To make matters worse, the Korean War broke out in 1950, and it played a decisive role in reinforcing military anti-communist education. Soon after the Korean War, school textbooks which depicted communism (North Korea) as an enemy to humankind were published by the state, and the national curriculum was restructured in ways that promote anti-communism (Kang Jin-woong, 2015: 289-297). Anti-communism also could be intensified by encouraging students to participate in anti-communism essay and drawing contests (ibid.). The subjugation of education to politics had become even worse by the military juntas (1963-1987). During his presidency (1963-1979), Park Jung-hee, who seized power through a military coup in 1961, entirely controlled education for his political purpose. Above all, education was an effective means by which to justify his regime via interpellating individuals as the nation (Oh Sung-chul, 2003: 60). In the name of national economic development and national security, President Park Jung-hee was able to distract attention from his oppressive rule such as harsh working conditions and the forcible suppression of political dissidents. The Charter of National Education was a symbol of Park Jung-hee's "nation-building project" (Hwang Byung-joo, 2005; also see Kong Che-uk, 2008). The Charter, which was established and abolished in 1968 and 1994 respectively, begins with the sentence "we are born with the historical mission to revive our nation" and concludes by focusing on "the

spirit of democracy and anti-communism”. As the supreme principle of education, the Charter had a strong influence on all kinds of education (Park Mi-ja, 2008: 167-168). The Charter was put into the first page of every state-published textbook, and students had to memorise its content. Within these historical and social contexts, political neutrality of education has been justified to protect education from the unjust exercise of political power particularly since the June Democratic Uprising of 1987. And, this is also the reason why political neutrality of education has been guaranteed by laws as below.

Independence, professionalism and political neutrality of education and the autonomy of institutions of higher learning shall be guaranteed under the conditions as prescribed by Act.

(Article 31 [4], Constitution of Korea)

Education shall be administered to secure the purpose of education per se and it shall not be used as a tool for propagating any political, factional or individual biased views.

(Article 6 [1], Framework Act on Education)

However, contrary to what one might expected, political neutrality of education has been a constant source of controversy in South Korea. Most of all, there is a huge gap between progressives and conservatives in understanding what political neutrality of education means. Political neutrality of education is defended, from a progressive point of view, to secure educational autonomy from the influence of external politics, whereas conservatives are more interested in seeking and removing the political from the field of education. To put it differently, progressives attempt to neutralise education by minimising external intervention, while

conservatives endeavour to make education neutral via various interventions in non-neutral education. From this we can infer that it is conservative forces that are keen to appropriate, albeit arbitrarily, the notion of political neutrality of education in reality. The main concern of this study is the conservative use of educational neutrality. At an everyday level, the conservative media play a crucial role in disseminating the idea that education should be separated from politics. As I demonstrate in Chapter Four, by contrasting education as ‘pure’ with politics as ‘polluted’, the conservative media contribute to the reinforcement of an antagonistic view between education and politics. At a socio-political level, various techniques of power are deployed by conservative forces to eliminate the political from education (Chapters Five and Six).

Teachers’ critical union activities, for example, have been at the centre of the conservatives’ critique of non-neutral education. Simply speaking, it is a widely held view that organisational collective activities to oppose the government are not educational but political. In the late 1980s, the Roh Tae-woo government (1988-1992) forcefully prohibited teachers from establishing their union on the ground that “teachers are different from general labourers” who go on strike and protest in a political way (MoE, 1989a). Shortly after the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers Union (KTU) was founded in 1989, the government dismissed approximately 1,500 teachers who joined the KTU. Despite the legalisation of the KTU in 1999, the KTU, who has often been against the state and national education policies, has long been regarded as a political group by conservative forces. For example, as soon as the KTU announced public statements denouncing the

government's handling of the Sewol ferry tragedy, the conservative government and far-right organisations labelled it as “non-neutral” and “political incitement” (Ohmynews, 2014b; 2014c; Yonhapnews, 2016). The Prosecution and the MoE also responded by ordering local education offices to take disciplinary actions against individual teachers who signed the public statements for violating political neutrality of education (Hankyoreh, 2017). The KTU has been labelled frequently as a subversive non-neutral political group by conservative media and politicians. The repression of the KTU reached its climax in 2013. The government decided to deprive the KTU of its legal status on the ground that its internal rules allow dismissed teachers to join the union as a member. The rise and fall of the KTU with regards to the demand for neutral education will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

What should be taught in schools (school knowledge) has also been one of conservatives' major concerns about political neutrality of education. No matter when critical approaches to controversial issues are brought into schools, conservative forces raise the problem of political neutrality of education. In 2003 when the controversy over the dispatch of troops to Iraq was on the rise, for instance, the KTU published teaching materials introducing the arguments for and against the Iraq War and expressed the need for peace education, which soon faced the stark opposition of conservative forces who are in favour of the Iraq War (see Lee Min-sook, 2004). Even the conservative party, Grand National Party, announced that “we are against the political lesson by the KTU as well as any political education that handles socio-political issues” (cited in ShindongA, 2004).

The statement clearly represents the situation in which controversy itself is treated as dangerous. Only neutral and “evidence-based” knowledge is counted (Biesta, 2010b), whilst controversial issues are excluded from the outset. In this sense, I would say that in South Korea, educational neutrality takes the form of what Kelly calls “exclusive neutrality” (1986: 114-116). The exclusive use of political neutrality of education mirrors, in particular, the South Korean war-political climate that brooks no criticism and opposition, which will be discussed in great detail in the following chapter. Since the early 2000s, it has been repeatedly alleged by the ‘new’ right that the existing history textbooks are fraught with politically biased left-wing views such as the anti-market economy and the pro-North Korea mentality (for the new right movement and the dispute over history textbooks see Kim Jae-joong, 2005; Kim Seong-wook, 2006; Kim Young-jae, 2006; Lee Shin-chul, 2007). With the re-emergence of the conservative governments led by Lee Myung-bak (2008-2013) and Park Geun-hye (2013-2016), conservative forces’ every effort has been made to make “politically neutral, objective, and balanced history textbooks”, according to conservative academics who were on the front line of the revision of history textbooks (Lee Joo-young, 2005; Lee Myung-hee, 2005). The decision to change the way of publishing history textbooks from the state-approved system to the state-published one in 2015 was the last resort to “win the history war against the left”, in the words of Kim Moo-sung, former leader of the conservative party, Saenuri Party (Newsis, 2013). The detailed account of the controversy surrounding history textbooks is provided in Chapter Six.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES OF THE KOREAN USE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY

Educational neutrality has been the language of conservative politics, which has been followed by specific practices. To borrow a phrase from Rifkin et al., it has served both “as an end (to be neutral) and as a means (to practice neutrality)” (1991: 152). Above all, at the heart of the conservative use of educational neutrality is to detach politics from education. On the contrary, a number of South Korean researchers have admitted in common that political neutrality of education never implies the incompatibility between education and politics (Kang Young-woong, 1984; Kim Young-jin, 1987; Kwon Jae-won, 2016; Sin Jeong-chul, 1987; Song Joon-seok, 1995; Sung Ki-sun, 2011). Rather, they highlight that education and politics are inextricably interconnected with each other. Not only is education a social institution that is affected heavily by political decisions, but it also produces political subjects who play a key part in maintaining and changing a society (Kim Young-jin, 1987: 330-331). Similarly, according to Kwon Jae-won, “politics itself is not a good or bad thing” that that we should avoid (2016: 53). Rather, politics, where diverse interests are met, discussed and mediated by various means, should be educated properly in and through schools (p.54). In this vein, some scholars claim that it is a “myth” or a “fantasy” that we can separate completely politics from education, and the idea of non-political neutral education itself is political (Song Joon-seok, 1995: 179-180, Sung Ki-sun, 2011: 51). Instead, it is stressed that to date, those who call for neutral education are those in power. Song Joon-seok thus contends that political neutrality of education only can be achieved by partisanship

to criticise power freely (1995: 193). In a similar fashion, Sung Ki-sun suggests that we need to abandon the untenable assumption that education is neutral, and we should instead consider more about the assumption that education is political (2011: 44). More blatantly, Kim Yong-taek equates giving up political stance in the name of educational neutrality with giving up education itself (2011: 103).

Many of these studies, however, were carried out a long time ago and only tackled very briefly the problem of educational neutrality. So, it seems necessary to review some more recent and systematic studies exploring the specific use of educational neutrality in South Korea. As I highlighted in the preceding section, the recent literature on educational neutrality tends to focus on the issues such as teacher neutrality and neutral school knowledge. Park Jeong-whan, for example, insists that teachers' educational and political autonomy be protected particularly under the public education system which is interwoven with politics, while criticising the state that sets itself up as guardian of educational neutrality (2003). The criticism of teacher neutrality is backed up by the real-life experiences of teachers. Especially, it has been reported that critical teachers who spoke out against the government or the school are being exposed to various exclusion from teaching (see Communebut, 2016a: 06-78; 2016b: 67-74). In a study conducted by Kim Sung-ja, it was revealed that teachers are excluded from the process of the national curriculum development in the name of neutrality (2006). With an emphasis on neutral professionalism, curriculum professionals play a much more important role in making the national curriculum than teachers. Kim Haeng-soo extrapolates the arbitrary characteristic of teacher neutrality from the empirical evidence that only

teachers who are involved in progressive political parties are treated as problematic (2016).

The arbitrary use of educational neutrality derives from the ambiguity of the term neutrality. By dictionary definition, neutrality means the state or condition of not being on any side (Oxford English Dictionary, accessed on 8th of April 2014)². Neutrality itself does not contain any distinctive principles as well as means to be neutral. Likewise, educational neutrality also remains open to different interpretations and uses. In this manner, Kim Myung-jung analyses the abstractness of neutral criteria for the authorisation of school textbooks (2013). Even though a set of standards for neutral textbooks was made by the government in 2013, the application of the standards was not consistent. Similarly, Bae-So-yeon's comprehensive review of laws on educational autonomy, professionalism, and neutrality concludes that such educational concepts are too loosely defined and used by laws (2013a). Through a close examination of the application of laws on educational neutrality, Bae So-yeon (2013b) demonstrates that educational neutrality is excessively used in practice to restrict teachers' political right. For Han Soo-woong, however, educational neutrality is seen as a necessary legal tool to encourage teachers to use their authority in ways consistent with constitutional values (2007).

² see Heybach, 2014: 46-48 for the etymological roots of the word neutrality.

Lee Don-hee (2015; 2016) generalises and updates Han Soo-woong's understanding of educational neutrality. It is indeed worth reviewing the work of Lee Don-hee at some length, because it offers the most recent and systematic study of political neutrality of education in South Korea. It particularly gives important consideration to theoretical grounds of the insistent demands for neutral education. Lee Don-hee (2016) identifies "liberal education", "civic education", and "plurality" as the major conditions for political neutrality of education. Firstly, within the tradition of liberal education, the prime goal of education is to improve intelligence (pp.37-43). Although it is admitted that specific programmes of liberal education can never be entirely free from political influence, liberal education prioritises the development of the ability to seek truth which is irrelevant to politics (p.13). Conversely and secondly, civic education, which aims to foster young people to become citizens who have proper national values and identities, presumes that education is deeply interconnected with political circumstances. Political neutrality of education, in civic education, means the effort to keep balance between different political forces (p.73). In this vein, he calls political neutrality of liberal education as "passive neutrality" and of civic education as "active neutrality" (ibid.). Thirdly, the discussion on political neutrality of education is only meaningful in an open society in which some degree of diversity or plurality are secured, according to him (p.76). But, he adds that plurality can only be allowed as long as national (constitutional) values and identities are respected (pp.102-130). With examining the Galston's distinction of neutrality (see the next section of this chapter), Lee Don-hee also attempts to distinguish different types of educational neutrality so as to strategically maintain neutrality between different political forces

(pp.134-138). “Inclusive Neutrality” and “Exclusive Neutrality” literally mean the absolute inclusion or exclusion of all competing forces. Whereas “Balanced Neutrality” or “Calculative Neutrality” is exercised on the basis of quantifiable data, “Authoritative Neutrality” or “Reasonable Neutrality” relies on professionals’ judgement that is made independently from political influence. Lastly, “Arbitrary Neutrality” becomes necessary when any decisions are expected to cause divisive effects. A lottery system can be taken as an example of arbitrary neutrality.

The work of Lee Don-hee gives us an insight into the necessity of educational neutrality as well as its possible functionality ‘in principle’. However, the previous studies of educational neutrality including the work of Lee Don-hee do not pay attention to why conservative forces have posed the problem of educational neutrality repeatedly, how the ideal of neutral education has been realised, and what their long-term effects are. This study attempts to answer those questions by situating the problem of educational neutrality within the wider socio-political context. But, let me examine more theoretical issues about educational neutrality, because most of the existing literature on the Korean use of educational neutrality has suffered from a lack of well-grounded theoretical considerations. In the case of the work of Lee Don-hee, it draws to a significant extent on liberal views of neutrality. Hence, by providing a more detailed theoretical overview of the (im)possibility and (un)desirability of educational neutrality³ in the following two sections, I would like to clarify the position of this study.

³ I borrowed the phrase (im)possibility and (un)desirability of educational neutrality from Waldren (2013).

4. POSSIBILITY AND DESIRABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY

Let me begin with the liberal defence of educational neutrality. Even though it is by no means easy to pinpoint what exactly is involved in liberalism (Ryan, 2012; Wall, 2015), there is no doubt that the principle of neutrality has been an important subject within the field of liberalism (Goodin & Reeve, 1989). This comes from liberal emphases on the “disagreement about the good life” and “toleration for the diversity of ideals and forms of life” (Larmore, 1987: 51). According to Ackerman, a liberal society must be neutral not only as to conflicting interests of its citizens but also between competing concepts of the good (1980, cited in Strike, 2001: 256). State neutrality is of particular importance to liberal political theory, due largely to the coercive nature of the state. The liberal state, as the power holder, should “impose no conception of the good upon its citizens but which allows individuals to pursue their own good in their own way” (Jones, 1989: 11). It should be acknowledged, however, that neutrality is not conceived by liberals as an absolute value. Rather, it serves as a justification principle. Let’s have a look at four distinctions of liberal neutrality that Galston proposes (1991: 100-101). Firstly, neutrality of opportunity allows all ways of life to exist. But, this kind of neutrality cannot be supported because there exist many examples of life requiring the repression of certain persons. Secondly, neutrality of outcome literally means neutral effects and influences of state agencies, which is simply impossible and thus

untenable. Thirdly, neutrality of aim implies that state policies should not strive to promote any permissible way of life or concept of the good over any other. Similarly, and fourthly, according to neutrality of procedure, state policies should be justified without appealing to the presumed intrinsic superiority of any particular concept of the good life. The third and fourth version of neutrality (reasonable and neutral justification of state agencies) are considered as necessary and feasible by liberals (Arneson, 2003; Klosko, 2003; Waldren, 2013). Arneson notes that when it comes to liberal neutrality, it generally means “neutrality of aim plus neutrality of justification” (2003: 194). Especially, according to Galston, whereas neutrality of aim had a particular impact on constitutional jurisprudence in the context of the First Amendment, procedural neutrality has become the most important principle since the 1980s when Dworkin’s *Liberalism* and Ackerman’s *Social Justice in the Liberal State* were published (Galston, 1991: 101). Galston goes on to say that procedural neutrality, “a special constraint on reasons that can be invoked to justify public policy”, is a key liberal concept (*ibid.*), because

It can be linked to liberal equality, as an expression of the equal respect due to every individual in his or her public capacity. It helps redraw the line between what majorities may rightly do and what must be reserved, as rights, to even small minorities. Relatedly, it reinvigorates the classic liberal distinction between the public and the private. Finally, it forcibly reiterates liberalism’s deep-seated antipathy to what might be called moral coercion.

(Galston, 1991: 102)

Neutrality of procedure or neutrality of justification is utilised by many proponents of educational neutrality as a sound basis for neutral education. A seminal study in

this area is the work of Waldren (2013). Waldren, first of all, points out two features of educational institutions that require neutrality of justification. That is, since educational institutions are “coercive” (particularly for children) and have a “profound effect on people’s lives”, neutral justification becomes necessary (Waldren, 2013: 74-75). Then, building on Arneson’s distinctions of neutrality (neutrality of effect, neutrality of aim, and neutrality of justification), Waldren specifies what exactly neutral justification means. According to Waldren, what underlies educational neutrality is not the principle that “no values can be appealed to in making decisions” but the principle that “decisions must not be justified by appeal to the superiority of certain comprehensive doctrines” (p.78). Stressing on neutral justification rather than value-free decision, Waldren counters criticism that liberal neutrality would result in value relativism. That is, what matters are aims and procedures (decisions) which are made independently from the superiority of certain values. School dress codes, for example, can be justified as a way to “run a school more effectively”, not by appeal to the superiority of certain comprehensive doctrines (pp.78-79). As an “instrumental justification”, neutrality can be used to help not only students to autonomously explore different comprehensive doctrines and decide how best to lead their lives but also schools to maintain order and thus function properly (pp.79-82).

To a certain extent, many advocates of educational neutrality share liberal ideas. In terms of state neutrality in education, Temperman, for instance, argues that “the state has a compelling obligation to remain neutral” particularly in the context of the compulsory state educational system (2010: 867). Neutrality is not a matter of

private education but a matter of mandatory public education, and it prevents “state indoctrination” (p.866). In order for the state to provide neutral education where all children equally receive quality education, Temperman additionally requires the state to perform its duties to “refrain from interferences” (negative duty) and to “proactively guarantee availability and access” (active duty) (p.867). Civic education, which is designed mostly by the state to promote certain values that are commonly accepted as worthwhile for a society, also draws attention from neutralists. For Strike, for example, neutrality plays a role in informing us as to “what civic education cannot be” (1988: 257). In a democratic society where nothing including democracy itself is treated as an obligatory good for all, neutral education that “emphasizes diversity rather than exclusion of different concepts of the good” forms the basis of civic education (p.260).

But above all else, neutral teaching has been the most crucial topic in the discussion about educational neutrality (Gardner, 1989). This is due largely to the fact that teachers, like the state, are entitled in general to exercise specific authority and influence over students in the field of education. The Humanities Curriculum Project, which was set up in 1967 in the UK, can be taken as an example (see Stenhouse, 1968; 1971). The project explored the problems of teaching controversial issues like war, education, the family, relations between the sexes, people and work, poverty, living in cities, law and order and race relations. According to the project, given the “inescapable authority position of the teacher” (Stenhouse, 1971: 155), an “enquiry-based” lesson is the best way to handle controversial issues in schools, where the teacher should become the “chairman of

a committee of enquiry or a discussion group” (Stenhouse, 1968: 31). With examining two objections to the project (the fact/value distinction and a lack of commitment), Elliott elucidates that the project’s idea of neutrality requires teachers not to be neutral in all aspects but to be procedurally neutral, where neutral teachings is a “deliberate act of refraining from exercising the teacher’s power” (1995). Noddings also makes a similar point, albeit very briefly, about the neutral process to deal with controversial issues in schools (2013). That is, the neutrality problem does not arise from scientifically-proved facts like Hitler’s Nazism. However, when controversial issues such as religion are under debate, “pedagogical neutrality”, which refers to a neutral process to “consider all reasonable points of view without endorsing one as the absolute truth”, could function as “an ethically and strategically effective way to introduce students to controversial issues” (Noddings, 2013: 63). Despite the need for more clarification of how pedagogical neutrality works, from her argument that “teachers need not claim that there is a God or that there is not a God”, we can see that she accepts the procedurally neutral role of the teacher (ibid.).

Meanwhile, from the perspective of critical sociology of education that mainly concerns the politics of education⁴, a liberal idea of neutral education rests on the naive assumption that different values, ideas and forces can be reconcilable through

⁴ There exist multiple traditions within critical educational studies. The ‘reproduction’ theory, developed by Althusser (1971), Bowles and Gintis (1975; 1976), Bourdieu (1984), Bourdieu & Passeron (1990) explores the role of education in re-producing social (economic and cultural) inequality. The ‘new’ sociology of education also offers analytical frameworks for the investigation of the political implications of schooling processes like curriculum (Apple, 1993; 1995; 1996; 2006; Bernstein, 2000; Whitty, 2010; Willis, 1978; Young et al., 1971).

the reasonably neutral processes in which the existing liberal democratic values play a part as a centripetal force. To put it another way, those who support (liberal) educational neutrality tend to concentrate on “technical and managerial questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of processes” (Biesta, 2010: 2), where political questions such as ‘by whom, by what, and how the distinction between what is and what is not political/neutral/educational is made?’ and ‘what is included or excluded in the name of educational neutrality?’ are bracketed out. In the same vein, Dale’s distinction between “the politics of education” and “education politics” is also helpful to understand the limit of liberal educational neutrality. According to Dale, “questions about processes of decision making” (education politics) replace “questions about the relationship between the production of goals and the form of their achievement” (the politics of education), whereby “politics are reduced to administration” (1989: 24).

The problem of the absence of the political in liberal neutrality is very well documented in Mouffe’s book *The Return of the Political* (2005). In the book, Mouffe criticises the liberal claim that different interests can be regulated by establishing neutral rules. Liberals trust that “a universal rational consensus could be produced by an undistorted dialogue, and that free public reason could guarantee the impartiality of the state” (p.140). However, pluralism, which is one of essential conditions for the need for (educational) neutrality, does not mean that:

All those conflicting conceptions of the good will coexist peacefully without trying to intervene in the public sphere, and

the frontier between public and private is not given once and for all but constructed and constantly.

(ibid.: 51)

Inherent in the workings of a pluralistic democratic society the agnostic and hegemonic confrontation between conflicting identities, norms, forces, and so on. There is no such thing as a substantive unity. “Any social objectivity is constituted through acts of power”, insists Mouffe (p.141). Liberals, however, conceal and transform such pluralistic and antagonistic political problems into administrative and technical ones (p.48). In this sense, neutral values, standards and distinctions themselves can be understood as “the result of a process of sedimentation of an ensemble of discourses and practices whose political character has been elided” (ibid.). Mouffe ends his critique of liberalism by quoting William Connolly’s argument that “the pretense to neutrality functions to maintain established settlements below the threshold of public discourse” (Connolly, 1991: 161, cited in Mouffe, 2005: 146). Mouffe’s interest in the political construction of the social helps us to think of the political construction of the educational. In other words, educational neutrality is no longer understood as a mere tool to prevent external non-educational political influence. Instead, the thing is the political nature of “the necessary frontiers and modes of exclusion” created by the discourse of educational neutrality (Mouffe, 2005: 145). The reason why I examine Critical Pedagogy in the next section is because it pays very special attention to such political questions about education, together with strong opposition to neutral education.

5. IMPOSSIBILITY AND UNDESIRABILITY OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY

As well as liberalism, critical pedagogy also resists easy definition. Critical pedagogy has its manifold roots, for example, in John Dewey's progressive education, Paulo Freire's emancipatory education, the Frankfurt School's critical theories, and so forth (Darder et al., 2009; Wink, 2011). There is also a great diversity of objects of critical pedagogical investigation, ranging from issues in the classroom to issues beyond the classroom. Accordingly, critical pedagogy consists of diverse subfields such as revolutionary critical pedagogy that concerns about "the lack of criticality in some versions of critical pedagogy" (Rikowski, 2007; also see McLaren, 2010 for revolutionary critical pedagogy). Above all, it is noteworthy that critical pedagogy has never attempted to provide an all-encompassing educational theory and method. "Critical pedagogy is not about an a priori method" but "always related to the specificity of particular contexts, students, communities and available resources" (Giroux, 2011: 4). Despite the heterogeneity of critical pedagogy, as Gottesman notes, "if there is one term associated with critical educational scholarship writ large, critical pedagogy is that term" (2016: 74). In recent years, there have been numerous books, articles, conferences, and even masters and doctoral programmes named critical pedagogy. Then, what is the shared perspective of critical pedagogy? The political nature of education.

Within critical pedagogy, it is a widely held view that education is not a pure transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the student but "a socially embedded and

historically located political project” (Carr & Hartnett, 1996: 6). Especially, the political nature of education has been the focal point of critical pedagogy, coupled with the impossibility and undesirability of educational neutrality. Bearing in mind that the interest of critical pedagogy in the political nature of education goes beyond that education is becoming crucial to the state or the institutional politics, I would like to highlight two ways of understanding the political nature of education in critical pedagogy. Each of them corresponds respectively to the impossibility and undesirability of neutral education. On the one hand, critical pedagogy is enthusiastic about unveiling unequal socio-political relations that are embodied explicitly and implicitly in educational institutions, subjects, knowledge, spaces, et cetera. Freire’s works are a classical example (1970; 1985; 1990; 2005; 2013). For Freire, it is impossible to think about education without considering the question of power like “in favor of whom or what do we promote education?” (1990: 78). Any forms of education are structured in a political way that contributes either to maintaining the existing (oppressive) social order or to liberating the oppressed. “There are no neutral education systems”, says Freire (ibid.). For instance, “problem-posing education” encourages people not only to develop critical consciousness about the way they exist in the world with the world but also to critically intervene in the world (see Freire, 1970: 52-67 for problem-posing and banking education). By contrast, “banking education” bases itself on false dichotomies that reflect and maintain oppressive society. In banking education, the teacher is posited as the subject, whilst the student is the mere object of the educational process. Knowledge/thought is divorced from reality/action. Banking education based on these binary oppositions brings about “the culture of silence”

that submerges critical consciousness and shrinks the possibility of critical intervention in reality impossible (p.87).

School knowledge is also chosen and organised in ways that promote dominant perspectives and thus keep a commonsense reality intact. Apple, for example, poses the following questions and endeavours to answer them (1993; 1995; 1996): “why and how particular aspects of the collective culture are presented in school as objective, factual knowledge?”, “how, concretely, may official knowledge represent ideological configurations of the dominant interests in a society?”, and “how do schools legitimate these limited and partial standards of knowing as unquestioned truths?” According to Apple (1993: 46),

It is naive to think of the school curriculum as neutral knowledge. Rather what counts as legitimate knowledge is the result of complex power relations and struggles among identifiable class, race, gender, and religious groups. Thus education and power are terms of an indissoluble couplet.

Meanwhile, by utilising Rancière’s work on the politics of aesthetics, Lambert more radically and experimentally illuminates the relationship between the educational environment and knowledge production (2011; 2012). Throughout the spatial re/configuration of education, dominant forms of knowledge and distances between research and teaching, knowing and doing, thinking and doing, aesthetics and politics are challenged, and the possibility of alternative forms of knowledge such as emotional and experiential knowledge are explored.

To repeat, critical pedagogues pay much heed to the fact that education is deeply rooted in socio-political relations. Neutral education is thus impossible. Furthermore, the demand for neutral education itself is political because as Counts warns, it serves to “give support to the forces of conservatism” (1932: 54). In a similar fashion, Giroux ties the demand for neutrality to the culture of positivism (1983: 13-17; 2011: 19-47)⁵. The culture of positivism refers to the domination of the logic and method of inquiry associated with the natural sciences. For instance, only ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’ data or facts independent of time and place are treated as legitimate in the field of education. Only ‘scientific’ methods that are designed to technically and mathematically classify, generalise, and evaluate phenomena are considered to be crucial. What is important to stress here is that “the fetishism of facts and the belief in value neutrality” have the political function to maintain the status quo (Giroux, 1983: 16). Positivistic neutral education omits questions concerning “the social construction of knowledge and the constitutive interests behind the selection, organization, and evaluation of brute facts” (Giroux, 2011:

⁵ Much of Giroux’s discussion on positivism relies on the work of the Frankfurt School. Giroux quotes Marcuse’s definition of positivism to clarify what positivism means and what its problems are, as below.

Since its first usage, probably in the school of Saint-Simon, the term “positivism” has encompassed (1) the validation of cognitive thought by experience of facts; (2) the orientation of cognitive thought to the physical science as a model of certainty and exactness; (3) the belief that progress in knowledge depends on this orientation. Consequently, positivism is a struggle against all metaphysics, transcendentalisms, and idealisms as obscurantist and regressive modes of thought: To the degree to which the given reality is scientifically comprehended and transformed, to the degree to which society becomes industrial and technological, positivism finds in the society the medium for the realization (and validation) of its concepts-harmony between theory and practice, truth and facts. Philosophic thought turns into affirmative thought; the philosophic critique criticizes within the societal framework and stigmatizes non-positive notions as mere speculation, dreams or fantasies.

(Marcuse, 1964)

26). In the same vein, Shor also blames “falsely neutral curricula” that put a strong emphasis on scientific techniques for ignoring the importance of “judging”, “questioning” and “critical contact with reality” (Shor & Freire, 1987: 12-13).

Beneath the hidden conceit of neutrality claimed by mainstream and right-wing media is a barrage of conservative and corporate-driven vocabularies, values, and ideas that undermine what it means to connect knowledge to the goal of nurturing a flourishing democracy.

(Giroux, 2012: 32)

On the other hand, critical pedagogy insists that not only is education politically constructed but also it should perform its political function to construct a more socially just and democratic society. In this regard, educational neutrality is seen as undesirable as well as impossible. For example, Shor maintains that education is political because it can “enable or inhibit the questioning habits of students thus developing or disabling their critical relation to knowledge, schooling and society” (1992: 12-13). Raising well-informed critical citizens capable of questioning and addressing social problems in a democratic way is of particular importance to critical pedagogues attentive to the public role of public education (Giroux, 1988; 2012). According to Feinberg, public education is to do with the “engagement of differences” rather than the creation of sameness (2012: 8). Students are motivated to bring their different experiences into classroom, to “read the world”, and to exercise transformative acts in an atmosphere of freedom (Freire, 1987: 35). “Engaged pedagogy” (Hooks, 1994; Mayo, 2013) and “transformative pedagogy”

(Mayo, 2003; Smyth, 2011; Torres 2004; 2013) representatively considers schools as political spheres in which democracy is exercised.

In terms of school knowledge, the belief in neutral and objective knowledge gives way to the idea of emancipatory knowledge. Following Jürgen Habermas, McLaren distinguishes three types of knowledge, i.e., “technical knowledge”, “practical knowledge”, and “emancipatory knowledge” (2009: 64). Technical knowledge is based on the positivistic view that I mentioned earlier in this section. Knowledge should be measurable and quantifiable. Practical knowledge is acquired through describing and analyzing social situations historically or developmentally. This kind of knowledge helps individuals to shape their daily actions. What many critical pedagogues are interested in is emancipatory knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge helps us not only understand relations of power and privilege but also overcome social injustice. Teachers also do not play a mere procedurally neutral role. They are not passive “executors of the laws and principles of effective teaching (Zeichner, 1983: 4, cited in Smyth, 2011: 27). They do not offer students only with “therapeutic education” that promises a rosy future (Amsler, 2011). Instead, teachers as “organic intellectuals”, in the words of Gramsci, critically reflect on and fight back social and political contradictions (Gramsci, 1971). Teachers’ authority is no longer an excuse for teacher neutrality. Whereas authoritarianism denies freedom and thus should be excluded, authority is and should be used as a way to expand democratic forms/goals of education (see Monchinski, 2008 for the distinction between authority and authoritarianism).

I am in full agreement with the perspectives of critical pedagogy. However, critical pedagogues' accounts of non-neutrality of education are also problematic. Most of all, they are over-simple. For many critical pedagogues assume a priori the impossibility and undesirability of educational neutrality, they tend to neglect the concrete situation in which educational neutrality comes into play in different forms in various ways. Crittenden is thus right to observe that Freire and other critical pedagogues do not provide much direct analysis of or support for their non-neutrality thesis (1980). It is also fair to stress the "applicability of neutrality" (p.8). Yet, by the same token, I cannot agree with Crittenden's argument that "a degree of neutrality is a necessary condition of autonomy" (p.:13). Simply speaking, to decide what is good neutrality or bad neutrality is obviously political. By showing how the idea of neutral education is used in non-neutral ways, this study demonstrate the idea of critical pedagogy that education is political and non-neutral.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have looked at the reality and theory surrounding the matter of educational neutrality. First and foremost, what has become the most problematic in South Korea amongst different forms of educational neutrality is political neutrality of education. The historical context of South Korean education, where education has long been used as a political tool, seems to legitimately require political neutrality of education. Here, political neutrality of education means protecting education from the unjust influence of external politics such as the state

or party politics, which is also related to the enhancement of educational autonomy. After the 1987 democratisation, South Korean education could be liberated from unilateral and oppressive political interventions. Nevertheless, the debate over political neutrality of education has continued so far. In the first two sections of this chapter, I have briefly explored the ways in which political neutrality of education is used in practice. In doing so, I have highlighted that educational neutrality has been used as a criterion to distinguish what is right and what is wrong educationally. Educational activities deemed political, albeit in an arbitrary way, are excluded in the name of educational neutrality. It seems evident that instead of increasing educational autonomy, the concept of educational neutrality has the effect of restricting it. In addition, it is conservative forces that are most actively appropriating the concept of educational neutrality. They argue that education and politics must be completely separated and ‘political education’ should be eliminated. Teachers’ union and school textbooks are the two main objects to which the principle of educational neutrality applies, which will be analysed thoroughly in Chapters Five and Six.

Meanwhile, I have drawn on a range of literature in order to narrow down and clarify my research questions. The literature considered here has admitted the ambiguity and arbitrariness of the use of educational neutrality. While refusing the idea of absolute neutrality, many (liberal) adherents of neutral education locate the matter of educational neutrality within the matter of procedural neutrality or neutral justification. Yet, the limited use of educational neutrality in liberal theory is also problematic. A great deal of the critical literature has argued that liberal theory of

neutrality fails to capture the political nature of education by reducing it to the matter of educational management. The tradition of critical pedagogy helps us think about the political nature of educational neutrality in relation to the impossibility and undesirability of educational neutrality. In particular, it is useful in seeing the demand for neutral education itself as a mixture of socio-political practices. The aim of this study is to critically analyse the conservative use of educational neutrality in South Korea. In the next chapter, theoretical frameworks able to analyse various techniques and effects of the discourse of educational neutrality will be developed.

CHAPTER TWO. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

For myself, I prefer to utilise the writers I like. The only valid tribute to thought such as Nietzsche's is precisely to use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest. And if commentators then say that I am being faithful or unfaithful to Nietzsche, that is of absolutely no interest.

(Foucault, 1975: 53-54)

1. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to develop a particular theoretical framework through which to situate the problem of educational neutrality in the wider socio-political context. In the previous chapter, I described the situation in which the problem of political neutrality of education has been raised by conservative forces in South Korea, pointing out the existing literature's lack of interest in the practical use of the concept of educational neutrality. In this chapter, I attempt to theoretically contextualise the conservative use of educational neutrality in relation to war-politics in which critical thought and action are put in danger. It seems necessary to mention briefly what I mean by the word critical, because "the word critical has become so much a part of the English lexicon that its academic meaning has begun to lose currency" (Ladson-Billings, 2014: 259, cited in Gottesman, 2016: 2). When someone or something is called critical, it generally includes both an awareness of unjust social relations that are not conducive to human emancipation and an act of

changing them. In the same vein, not only does critical education aim to foster the critical consciousness of “the ways in which educational policy and practice are connected to the relations of exploitation and domination and to struggles against such relations in the larger society”, but it also encourages both teachers and students to engage in various transformative activities for changing the unequal social relations inside and outside school (Apple, 2013). In the tradition of critical education, school should function as “a laboratory for democracy and a bulwark against an unjust and oppressive world”, in the words of Pinar (2010: xvi).

Now, let me be more specific about war-politics. Kim Dong-choon’s work on “war-politics” seems particularly appropriate in order to understand why and how conservative forces literally and figuratively imprison critical thought and action in South Korea. Briefly speaking, critical thought and action are treated as threats to national security under the circumstances in which a military confrontation between South Korea and North Korea still maintains. Education is no exception. The example of the Sewol ferry disaster, referred to in the introductory section of Chapter One, demonstrates that any attempts to bring social issues into the classroom and engage in social activities (critical thought and action) are seen as political, non-neutral, and therefore non-educational in South Korea. From the Sewol ferry case, I could deduce that there may be a close link between the conservative use of educational neutrality and war-politics. The framework of war-politics is generative particularly for explaining how critical thought and action are forcefully suppressed in the name of securing neutral education. The key features of war-politics will be considered in detail in the following section. However, the

war-politics framework needs to be complemented for several reasons. Sections Three, Four and Five will do so by turning to Foucault's work. In Section Three, I use Foucault's 1976 lecture course on the relationship between war and politics and state racism as a tool with which to specify what kinds of critical thought and action are particularly problematic in war-politics or "state racism" in Foucault's term (Foucault, 2003). Then, Section Four explores how war-politics can work effectively in a time of neo-liberalism on the premise that war-politics has different forms and working mechanisms over time. Along with the shift from authoritarianism to democracy (1987) to neoliberalism (1997) in South Korea, there have been changes in the operation of war-politics. Even though Kim Dong-choon very briefly mentions the emergence of "soft war-politics", however, variations in war-politics remain underdeveloped in his analysis (2013: 74). By giving us an insight into the complexities of modern politics including neo-liberal politics, Foucault's work on (neo-liberal) governmentality help me to develop an analytical framework through which to analyse the workings of war-politics today (Foucault, 2007; 2008). Finally, Section Five addresses a matter of resistance. Despite the fact that some argue that it is barely possible to think of the possibility of resistance in Foucault's theory because power is everywhere, Foucault's discussions of parrhesia prompt me to think of the importance of critical speeches that introduce a break with the war-political definition of what is say-able and do-able.

2. WAR-POLITICS AND THE CRISIS OF CRITICISM (1): KIM DONG-CHOON

In this section, I explain where war-politics comes from, how it works, and why it is suitable for analysing the problem of educational neutrality. War-politics, which is conceptualised by Kim Dong-choon, is a South Korea's dominant political structure which has been made and intensified by conservative forces (Kim Dong-choon, 2009; 2011; 2013). There is, of course, no such thing as a single unitary social structure that penetrates through all the characteristics of a society. Instead, a society is structured in a number of ways by various agents, agencies, institutions, existing structures and so forth (Giddens, 1984). Also, as critical realists maintain, the effects of social structures vary according to different generative causes (Benton & Craib, 2010: 120-141; Sayer, 2000). One of the ways to understand South Korea's complicated socio-political structures is to look at the so-called "Regime Debate" which took place in 2009 (see Kim Jong-yeop, 2009; Institute of Social Sciences, 2009). Those in favour of the '87 Regime, for example, place an emphasis on the fact that thanks to the 1987 June Uprising, both the collapse of the military dictatorship and the democratic transition of South Korea could be possible (Cho Hee-yeon, 2009, also see Chapter Three for a brief outline of the key historical events). They see Korean society through the lens of hegemonic struggles between democratic forces and authoritarian forces. Meanwhile, the '97 Regime refers to the neoliberal transformation of South Korea since the 1997 IMF economic crisis. Scholars supporting the '97 Regime stress that under the influence of economic globalisation, economic prosperity becomes the spirit of the times instead of the consolidation of the democracy (Kim Ho-ki, 2009; Son Ho-cheol, 2009). Despite the usefulness of these social structural changes in understanding Korean society, I

would argue that Kim Dong-choon's conception of war-politics is particularly appropriate for analysing the conservatives' ruling strategy. But again, war-politics is not irrelevant to the social structural changes that I mentioned in the above.

It is Kim Dong-choon who conceptualises and develops the term war-politics as a structural power to dominate Korean society. In his book *War-Politics*, Kim Dong-choon defines war-politics as "the circumstance in which the primary goal of the state is to treat dissident forces within the state as enemies and to annihilate them on the assumption that the state is facing an enemy internally and externally" (2013: 170-171). The Korean War is the most direct and important factor in the reinforcement of war-politics. According to Kim Dong-choon, although the Korean War, which broke out in 1950, could end with the Armistice Agreement in 1953, "a system of military and political confrontation and national mobilization practice on a daily basis" were left as a legacy (2009: 213). Especially, as the whole Korean Peninsula was embroiled in the war and the front line began to move back and forth, both South Korean and North Korean residents came to be suspected and punished by both armies and both states. The state adopted a political strategy to shift blame for the war on internal dissidents, regard them as enemies, and eliminate them during and after the war. In particular, since the Korean War, communists or "reds" have become an "evil" or a "non-human" who should be exterminated, and anti-communism has played a key role in operating war-politics at the ideological level in South Korea (Kang Seong-hyun, 2013: 262; Kim Deuk-joong, 2009:372; Kim Dong-choon, 2013: 174; 2017). Here I should note that the Korean War is not the only reason for the formation of war-politics. Colonial experiences and the

international Cold War system in particular contributed to the birth of war-politics. The Rhee Syng-man government (the first Korean government, 1948-1960) had a close relationship with the previous U.S. Army Military Government (1945-1948) whose “ultimate political mission was to build the anti-Soviet and anti-communist block on the Korean Peninsula” (Lee Seoung-won, 2008: 90). Accordingly, the Rhee government was enthusiastic about the establishment of the anti-communist state. But again, there is no doubt that the Korean War was the catalyst for spreading the logic of war into the whole society.

Almost thirty years of the military dictatorship (1961-1987) also had an enormous impact on the intensification of war-politics. Repressive state apparatuses like the army, police, and intelligence agency were mobilised to forcefully expel political adversaries from society. Law was a means to justify the operation of war-politics. Emergency Measures that were declared nine times during Park Jung-hee’s military regime are the case in point. One of the key goals of Emergency Measures was to prohibit people from spreading false rumours and inciting people. According to the report published by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 94.5 percent of the indictment cases for violating nine Emergency Measures were on the criticism of the government, student movement, and opposition politics (2006: 296). In addition to such exceptional measures, the National Security Law (NSL), which first came into force in 1948 as a tool to counter the military threat posed by North Korea in 1948, has been used routinely to date as a legal way to punish anti-state activities, despite concerns of its arbitrary use and human rights violations (Amnesty

International, 2012; Human Rights Watch, 2015). Below are controversial clauses of the NSL.

- (1) Any person who praises, incites or propagates the activities of an anti-government organization, a member thereof or of the person who has received an order from it, or who acts in concert with it, or propagates or instigates a rebellion against the State, with the knowledge of the fact that it may endanger the existence and security of the State or democratic fundamental order, shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than seven years. <Amended by Act No. 4373, May 31, 1991>
- (4) Any person who is a member of the organization as referred to in paragraph (3), and fabricates or circulates any false fact as to the matters which threaten to provoke any confusion of social order, shall be punished by imprisonment for a definite term of two or more years. <Amended by Act No. 4373, May 31, 1991>
- (5) Any person who manufactures, imports, reproduces, holds, carries, distributes, sells or acquires any documents, drawings or other expression materials, with the intention of committing the act as referred to in paragraph (1), (3) or (4), shall be punished by the penalty as referred to in the respective paragraph. <Amended by Act No. 4373, May 31, 1991>

Despite the democratic transition of Korean society after the 1987 June Uprising, war-politics is still working today. For instance, the Cyber Warfare Command was accused of running a special team to censor online debate on social issues and post pro-government comments on the internet bulletin boards (Kyunghayng, 2017). The National Intelligence Service (NIS) also intervenes in domestic politics by surveilling critical forces and uses the confrontation between the North and the South in a politically motivated manner (Hankyoreh, 2017; also see Seo Eo-ri, 2016

for how North Korean defectors are manufactured as spies by the NIS). Although there was an attempt to abolish the NSL under the liberal administration of President Roh Moo-hyun, the attempt was frustrated by the strong opposition of conservative forces. Even, under the two conservative governments (2008-2017), the number of cases filed over alleged violations of the NSL has increased sharply from 44 cases in 2008 to 129 cases in 2013 (Supreme Prosecutor's Office 2015). For example, the representative of "Laborers' book", an online library providing critical and progressive books of humanities and social sciences, was arrested in 2016 on the suspicion of possessing and offering "books that benefit the enemy" including *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, thereby infringing the NSL (Kyunghyang, 2017a). In South Korea, Freire's classic book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, which is translated into countless languages and gains worldwide influence, is treated as a book benefiting the enemy. What is more important here is the fact that only a very small number of those accused receive an actual prison sentence. As Kim Dong-choon remarks, this means that "the law was used not to tackle threats to national security but to control internal resistance" (2011: 348). On an everyday level, anti-communism takes the form of the "pro-North Korea discourse" (see Cultural Action, 2013). Many collective and critical activities are treated as an act of benefiting North Korea. And, those who participate in such collective and critical activities are regarded as enemies.

In sum, war-politics is a socio-political mechanism for constantly dividing 'friend' from 'enemy' and eliminating enemy in the name of society. Yet, I would like to highlight that it is not just political adversaries that become the target of war-

politics. As Kim Dong-choon also points out as below, critical thought and action themselves are deemed “dangerous and unacceptable for the state” (2013: 26). I mentioned briefly in the preceding section what I mean by the term critical. That is, both an awareness of unjust social relations and an act of transforming are under control of war-politics. I locate the use of educational neutrality within the war-political mechanism. As we can see from the case of the Sewol ferry tragedy presented in Chapter One, what becomes problematic as to educational neutrality is educators or educational contents dealing with social issues critically. They are regarded as political, non-neutral, and thus non-educational. From this, it can be assumed that an attempt to neutralise education is part of war-political practices to incapacitate the potential for thinking and acting critically. In the remaining sections of the chapter, drawing on Foucault’s work on state racism, governmentality, and parrhesia, I complement the framework of war-politics,

When the key authorities and state apparatuses have the idea that those having critical thought and even critical thought itself are dangerous and unacceptable for the state, so that they should be eliminated, it expands into the view that it is possible not only to secretly investigate and surveil people with different and dangerous opinions and experiences but also to arrest, detain, and even kill them without legal grounds particularly if the state faces a national crisis like war or civil war.

(Kim Dong-choon, 2013: 26)

3. WAR-POLITICS AND THE CRISIS OF CRITICISM (2): FOUCAULT ON STATE RACISM

Society Must Be Defended is a book that compiles the lectures delivered by Foucault in 1976 at the Collège de France. In this book, by inverting Clausewitz's aphorism ("war is the continuation of politics by other means"), Foucault insists that "politics is the continuation of war by other means" (2003: 15). As Kim Dong-choon does, Foucault introduces the model of war as a tool for understanding politics. However, Foucault's war-politics is not to reveal repressive war elements embedded in politics, but to stress historical and strategical relations of powers (domination) that are formed by struggles between different forces. The assumption that "there is no such thing as a neutral subject" and "we are all inevitably someone's adversary" underlies Foucault's war-politics (p.51). Indeed, by using the model of war, Foucault does not intend "to demonstrate the State's right, to establish its sovereignty, to recount its uninterrupted genealogy, and to use heroes, exploits, and dynasties to illustrate the legitimacy of public right" (p.141). Rather, for Foucault, it is important to see specific struggles that introduce a break in existing domination and constitute new relations of force by means of knowledge, institutions, and even bodies. This is the reason why Foucault pays special attention to Boulainvilliers, while criticising classical political theorists such as Hobbes and Machiavelli. As his famous maxim the war of all against all signifies, Hobbes seems to use war as an analyzer of power relations. However, there is no "a direct clash of forces battles" in Hobbes' theory, according to Foucault (p.93). Instead, there is only "the interplay between a will, a covenant, and representation", all of which are made on the basis of the likelihood of war (p.94). The state Hobbes is describing is thus a sort of "unending diplomacy between rivals who are naturally equal" (p.92).

Likewise, Machiavelli's analysis of the relationship of force is not about real war but about "a political technique that had to be put in the hands of the sovereign" (p.164).

Basically, Hobbes's discourse is a certain "no" to war. It is not really war that gives birth to States, and it is not really war that is transcribed in relations of sovereignty or that reproduces within the civil power-and its inequalities-the earlier dissymmetries in the relationship of force that were revealed by the very fact of the battle itself.

(p.97)

In contrast to Hobbes and Machiavelli, Boulainvilliers attracts Foucault's attention. Louis XIV ordered his administration to produce the reports on the state of France for his heir, the duc de Bourgogne, and Boulainvilliers was appointed to present the kernel of the reports to the duc de Bourgogne. Thus, Boulainvilliers summarised the reports, and added a preface and some comments. For Foucault, Boulainvilliers's text is very interesting for two reasons. First, in Boulainvilliers's text, both "juridical knowledge" and "quantitative economic knowledge" that were considered as the king's or the state's knowledge gave way to "historical knowledge" (pp.130-2). Instead of equipping the king with administrative knowledge on how to govern the state, Boulainvilliers tried to remind the king of the nobles' and monarch's forgotten memories so as to "reconstitute the legitimate knowledge of the king" (p.130). Second, Foucault, more fundamentally, stresses the fact that knowledge becomes a weapon in a field of power struggles. What Boulainvilliers did is not simply to describe historical relations of force but to change them through (historical) knowledge.

Boulainvilliers establishes a historico-political continuum to the extent that, when he writes history, he has a specific and definite project: his specific goal is restore to the nobility both a memory it has lost and a knowledge that it has always neglected. What Boulainvilliers is trying to do by giving it back its memory and its knowledge is to give it a new force, to reconstruct the nobility as a force within the forces of the social field. For Boulainvilliers, beginning to speak in the domain of history, recounting a history, is therefore not simply a matter of describing a relationship of force, or of reutilizing on behalf of, for example, the nobility a calculation of intelligibility that had previously belonged to the government. He is doing so in order the [sic] modify the very disposition and the current equilibrium of the relations of force. History does not simply analyze or interpret forces: it modifies them. The very fact of having control over, or the fact of being right in the order of historical knowledge, in short, of telling the truth about history, therefore enables him to occupy a decisive strategic position.

(p.171)

Meanwhile, it is interesting to point out that Foucault turns his attention to the elimination of the element of war from politics as well as the birth of an internal war. This is the point at which Kim Dong-choon's and Foucault's war-politics converge. First, the elimination of war from politics occurred in parallel with the re-emergence of the notion of the nation. According to Foucault, from the Revolution onward, war was no longer waged by different forces, and it no longer played a constitutive role in politics (p.215). Instead, war began to be waged by superior races against inferior races within the state. Foucault says, this is "a great retreat from the historical to the biological, from the constituent to the medical" (p.216). The retreat of war from politics could be possible through the revival of "national/statist universality" (p.222). National universality does not mean the unity

of historical experiences (e.g. struggles and relations of domination). Rather, it is more to do with the unity of the state. By examining Sieyès's text on the Third Estate, Foucault argues that the nation began to be seen as "a group of individuals who have the potential capacity to ensure the substantive and historical existence of the nation" (p.221). The nation is the sum of the individual abilities to form an army, a magistrature, a church, and an administration, that is, the individual abilities to run the state (p.220). Sieyès's text depicts the Third Estate as capable of fulfilling various functions of the state, and therefore makes the Third Estate a nation.

The essential function and the historical role of the nation is not defined by its ability to exercise a relationship of domination over other nations. It is something else: its ability to administer itself, to manage, govern and guarantee the constitution and workings of the figure of the State and of State power. Not domination, but State control.

(p.223)

Second, the emergence of an internal war. Foucault starts the last lecture of the 1976 course by saying "the theme of a war between races does not disappear" (p.239). But, it takes the form of "an internal war that defends society against threats born of and in its own body" (p.216). The extreme version of an internal war can be found in what Foucault defines as state racism. But, before explaining the term, it is necessary to look at the characteristics of bio-power, because state racism is a "formidable extension of bio-power" (p.254). According to Foucault, classical (sovereign) power exercises "the right of sword" or "the right to take life or let live" (pp.240-241). However, since the seventeenth century, power has begun to intervene in the human body as well as life. Power now serves to "make live and

let die” (p.241). In particular, in the second half of the eighteenth century, a new technology of power to manage man-as-species emerged, which is called bio-power or bio-politics⁶. In bio-politics, the population is of key interest to power. Compared to the social/legal/physical body in sovereign and disciplinary power, the population as “a multiple body or a body with so many heads” is considered to be crucial in bio-politics (p.245). Once the criteria of the population are set up, heretofore individual, contingent, and thus unpredictable things become much more manageable. Bio-power installs security or regulatory mechanisms such as the institutions of insurance today, in order “to establish an equilibrium, maintain an average, establish a sort of homeostasis, and compensate for variations within the population and its aleatory field” (p.246). Making use of technical and medical knowledge like the demographics of the ratio of births to deaths, the rate of reproduction, the fertility of a population, and so on, bio-power “regulates” and “normalises” life and human beings as living beings, by extension, a society.

However, Foucault raises a paradoxical question, that is, “how will the power to kill and the function of murder operate in this technology of power?” (p.254). To answer the question, Foucault re-introduces the notion of racism. According to Foucault, racism serves to divide the population into a mixture of different races, which results in the establishment of the hierarchy of races. Then, racism comes to

⁶ The operation of disciplinary- and bio-power is connected with each other. Foucault takes working-class housing estates built in the nineteenth century as an example. Not only does the spatial layout of the working-class town influence on the ways in which individuals behave trains, but it is also related to a matter of the whole town’s health-insurance system, for example (Foucault, 2003: 250-251).

apply the war principle, “in order to live, you must destroy your enemies”, to ‘inferior’ races (p.255).

This is not, then, a military, warlike, or political relationship, but a biological relationship. And the reason this mechanism can come into play is that the enemies who have to be done away with are not adversaries in the political sense of the term; they are threats, either external or internal, to the population and for the population. In the biopower system, in other words, killing or the imperative to kill is acceptable only if it results not in a victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species or race. There is a direct connection between the two. In a normalizing society, race or racism is the precondition that makes killing acceptable.

(pp.255-256)

Here the new discourse emerges: “we have to defend society against all the biological threats posed by the other race, the subrace, the counterrace that we are, despite ourselves, bringing into existence” (p.61). Nazism and Sovietism are examples of state racism. Whereas in the Nazi period, the state took responsibility for “the biological protection of the race”, the Soviet state attempted to eliminate “the class enemy” such as the sick, the deviant, and the madman (pp.82-83). And, in order to enact state racism, Nazism relied on “a whole popular, almost medieval, mythology”, whilst Sovietism utilised “scientific” and policing mechanisms (ibid.). Generally speaking, in state racism, “racial purity” replaces race struggles (p.81).

In Foucault’s account of state racism, it is by no means difficult to discover the similarity between Foucault’s and Kim Dong-choon’s theoretical concerns. Above

all, they have a common interest in how and on what conditions power of death can be exercised in modern society. However, through Foucault's whole 1976 lecture course (the emergence of historico-political discourse and its demise), I want to add two further points about war-politics. First, what is treated as problematic by war-politics is the exposure of the existence of struggles. Struggles here are not confined to subversive political movements. More broadly, they include any activities and knowledge to "question power about its discourse of truth" or "question truth concerning its power effects", whereby statist universality as the basis of war-politics is put in danger (Foucault, 1978b: 386). In the context of war-politics, educational neutrality is intended to remove "the messy social relations of sexism, racism, and class discrimination that underlie school and classroom relations" (Giroux, 1988: 19). Thus it promotes a "politics of silence" and an "ideological amnesia" (ibid.). Second, it is important to stress that war-politics changes its logic and strategies over time. In particular, what I want to highlight is that the exercise of power of death should be understood in relation to the exercise of power of life, as Foucault understands state-racism as an extension of bio-power. Kim Dong-choon's analysis of war-politics pays little attention to non-repressive aspects of war-politics. After the 1976 lecture course, instead of developing the war framework, Foucault focused on 'productive' aspects of power, which helps to understand the working of war-politics today.

4. WAR-POLITICS IN A TIME OF NEO-LIBERALISM: FOUCAULT ON (NEO-LIBERAL) GOVERNMENTALITY

War-politics works through diverse power technologies whose articulation may differ over time. Foucault's work on power gives us an insight into the complexities of the operation of power. For Foucault, power is not "a phenomenon of mass and homogeneous domination-the domination of one individual over others, of one group over others, or of one class over others" (Foucault, 2003: 29). Rather, power is exercised in historically heterogenic and strategical ways. Indeed, it is not difficult to infer the difference between the way in which war-politics operates soon after the Korean War and today. In this section, I examine how war-politics can come into play in a time of neo-liberalism, bearing in mind that Korean society has undergone significant neoliberal changes since the 1997 economic crisis. I do so by turning to Foucault's 1978 and 1979 lecture courses on governmentality and neoliberalism.

Foucault sees neoliberalism through the lens of governmentality which is coined by Foucault himself in order to explain the working of modern power. Thus, I start with the concept of governmentality. Governmentality can be defined as an ensemble of rationalities and technologies that aim "to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons" (Gordon, 1991: 2). The early Christian pastoral relationship between the shepherd and the flock is considered as a prototype of governmentality. With a detailed knowledge of the flock and with the goal of salvation, the shepherd keeps watching, examining, guiding a single sheep and the whole of the flock. This is why Foucault calls pastoral power as a "beneficent power" or "power of care" (2007: 126-127). However, the transition from the

spiritual government to the political government occurred since the sixteenth century. Instead of the salvation of the flock or souls, the growth of the state became the objective of government, where all the things “began to be thought of as elements of the state” (p.286). Calculated political techniques (controls, constraints, and so on), which were called “police” at the time in a broad sense, are of particular importance to “the increase of the state’s forces and its good order” (p.313). The police state is always vigilant in checking and controlling social environments such as the problem of population and health. Most of all, the police state is interested in “men’s activity insofar as this activity constitutes a differential element in the development of the state’s forces” (p.322). Not surprisingly, the number of theories, books, and manuals with regards to the *Polizeiwissenschaft* (the science of police) had rocketed from the end of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century (p.318).

Police must succeed in linking together the state’s strength and individual felicity. This felicity, as the individual’s better than just living, must in some way be drawn on and constituted into state utility: making men’s happiness the state’s utility, making men’s happiness the very strength of the state.

(p.327)

However, from the end of the eighteenth century, regulatory government of the state was replaced by liberal government. The physiocrats or *économistes*, in particular, insisted that the state’s infinite, detailed, and artificial intervention could not solve the problem of the price of grain at the time, and it would be better to let the agricultural market (not the city) function on its own. The point is that “not only is there a certain course of things that cannot be modified, but precisely by trying to

modify it one makes things worse” (p.344). In terms of the population which was vital to the strength of the state in police, for example, “large numbers of docile workers” themselves are no longer important (ibid.). Instead, the thing is “an optimum number of people”, where too many interventions are not required (p.345). Free trade takes place not between rival countries but between “private individuals”, where the state plays a role as “the regulator of interests” in ensuring the happiness of each and of all (p.347). In contrast to an artificiality of the governmentality of police, the governmentality of the *économistes* prioritises a “naturalness” and makes efforts to create a (civil) society that works through the principle of naturalness (p.349). Political economy emerges as a legitimate form of knowledge in the liberal governmentality because it reflects on governmental practices themselves and their effects in the light of the naturalness of the market, so as to prevent governing too much (Foucault, 2008: 13-15). Various “security mechanisms” are also set up in order to make it possible for individuals to manage and tackle their risks and problems by themselves (Foucault, 2007: 350-353). In this sense, Foucault says that “the market became a site of verification-falsification for governmental practice” (2008: 32).

The liberal art of government has undergone the neo-liberal transformation since the Second World War, particularly in Germany and the USA. Especially, Foucault devoted five lectures out of twelve lectures which were given in 1979 to examining the features of German neoliberalism. What draws Foucault’s attention is the re-introduction of governmental interventions in substitution for the naturalness of the market in the post-war reconstruction process of Germany, which has to do with

what Foucault calls “phobia of the state” (2008: 76). That is to say, under the conditions that the Nazi experience and the defeat of Germany in the Second World War deprived Germany of the state’s legitimacy, it was inevitable for Germany to rebuild a totally new state. Germany in particular tried “to create a space of freedom, to guarantee a freedom, and precisely to guarantee it in the economic domain”, where “the economy produces legitimacy for the state that is its guarantor” (Foucault, 2010: 75-84). The Freiburg School, whose representative scholars are Eucken and Hayek, played a crucial role in the construction of the German ordo-liberal state⁷, arguing that a society should be supervised and regulated in order to make the competitive market order function properly “as the principle, form and model of the state” (Gane, 2012: 77). If the old version of liberalism stresses exchange and non-intervention, what becomes crucial in the German version of liberalism is competition and intervention (Foucault, 2008: 118-119). The order-liberals believe that social and economic problems such as monopoly that is caused by “a naïve naturalism” could be prevented by securing “full and complete competition” (p.120). Yet, it should be noted here that, as Eucken says, “the state should influence the forms of economy, but not itself the economic process” (1951: 95, cited in Gane, 2012: 78).

Government must not form a counterpoint or a screen, as it were, between society and economic processes. It has to intervene on society as such, in its fabric and depth. Basically, it has to intervene on society so that competitive mechanisms can play a regulatory role at every moment and every point in society and by intervening in this way its objective will become

⁷ The terms ordo-liberalism and ordo-liberals come from the name of the journal *Ordo* that was founded by Walter Eucken in 1948.

possible, that is to say, a general regulation of society by the market.

(Foucault, 2008: 145)

Whereas ordo-liberalism puts an emphasis on governmental intervention on society, as quoted in the above, American neo-liberalism “refuses the division between society and economy” and more radically reconstructs “a whole way of being and thinking” in consonance with the competitive market principle (Foucault, 2008: 218; Seo Dong-jin, 2008: 330). The Chicago School, in particular, made a profound impact on American neo-liberalism, as the Freiburg School did in Germany. The theory of human capital developed by Gary Becker is the case in point. According to Foucault, classical economists only dealt with labor in its “abstract” forms such as the processes of the product, while human capital theory and neo-liberals are interested in the ways in which individuals utilise “scarce means” to achieve “competing ends” in their everyday lives (p.222). In this regard, the homo economicus who treats him/herself as an enterprise and makes an endless effort to develop him/herself is posited as the ideal subject of neo-liberalism (pp.224-233, also see Besley & Peters, 2007; Bröckling, 2016 for more about the entrepreneurial self). Put it differently, as Gordon says, the neoliberal homo economicus is “manipulable man who is perpetually responsive to modifications in his environment” (1991: 43). Today, we can witness almost everywhere the deployment of neo-liberal technologies such as “self-help” and “audit” mechanisms that urge us to manage, educate and evaluate ourselves as entrepreneurs, thereby optimising our efficiency (McGee, 2005; Rose, 1999: 137-166; Seo Dong-jin, 2009).

Foucault's work on neo-liberalism is useful, because it does not reduce neoliberalism to an economic ideology. Instead, neo-liberalism is an ensemble of new economic rationalities and technologies which have influenced to date on the ways we think and act. However, what I would like to highlight here particularly is that Foucault is mindful of the interplay between liberal and illiberal government. For example, one of the characteristics of the (neo) liberal art of government is the coexistence of disciplinary techniques. That is, "procedures of control, constraint, and coercion" do not disappear in neo-liberal societies but function as tools for protecting and educating different freedom (Foucault, 2008: 67). In the words of Deleuze, (neo-) liberal societies are also "the societies of control" (1992; see also Rose, 2000). Foucault's interest in ordo-liberalism may not be irrelevant to the seemingly paradoxical idea of the realization of economic freedom through social regulation. American neo-liberalism is no exception. Lawrence Mead, for example, notes that

American political culture gives pride of place to the value of freedom. But a free society is possible only when the conditions for order have substantially been realised. People are not interested in 'freedom' from government if they are victimized by crime, cannot support themselves, or are in any fundamental way insecure. They will want more government rather than less.

(1986: 6, cited in Dean, 2002: 38)

In other words, "the illiberality of liberal government" is not an impossible and exceptional phenomenon at all (Dean, 2010: 156-163). (Neo-) Liberal government presupposes a specific kind of freedom or free subject such as homo economicus,

and excludes those who do not have the required attributes such as autonomy and responsibility by using “authoritarian” and “despotic” means (Dean, 2002; 2010: 156-163; Valverde, 1996).

Within liberal forms of government, at least, there is a long history of people who, for one reason or another, have been deemed not to possess or to display the attributes (e.g. autonomy, responsibility) required of the juridical and political subject of rights and who have therefore been subjected to all sorts of disciplinary, bio-political and even sovereign interventions.

(Dean, 2010: 158)

Against this backdrop, we can think of war-politics working in a time of neo-liberalism. In the ‘old’ version of war-politics, critical thought and action are considered as the key attributes of the reds who aim to disrupt the existing social order and inculcate communist ideas in the general public. Yet, the ‘new’ version of war-politics is more likely to tie critical thought and action to a deficit of social norms or ethics such as competency and responsibility. Whereas people with critical consciousness are subjected to harsh punishment in the old version of war-politics, they are exposed to various disciplinary measures in the new version of war-politics. A combination of the old and new version of war-politics is evidently shown in the newspaper discourses about educational neutrality (see Chapter Four). For example, critical teachers are depicted not only as political dissidents but also as negligent in their work and irresponsible for their students. It is also noteworthy that war-politics do not simply depend on repressive sovereign power mechanisms. In Chapters Five and Six, I illuminate the ways in which war-politics mobilises

various (sovereign and neo-liberal) power mechanisms in order to eliminate and regulate critical thought and action. Now, I turn to a matter of resistance in the following section.

5. WAR-POLITICS AND RESISTANCE: FOUCAULT ON PARRHESIA

This study attends to the relationship of the conservative use of educational neutrality to war-politics in which critical thought and action become objects of punishment and regulation. I assume that the concept of educational neutrality is utilised by conservative forces as a ground for punishing critical thought and action in the realm of education. Also, neutral education itself is set as an ideal education, whereas critical education is deemed improper particularly in a time of neo-liberalism. Thus, various ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ interventions are made to neutralize (critical) education. In this section, following Foucault’s discussions of parrhesia, I explore the possibility of resistance to the neutralization of education.

In his later works, Foucault elaborates on how we construct ourselves as true subjects under the influence of uneven governmental relations. To do so, Foucault pays special attention to the Greek term parrhesia. The word parrhesia, which can be defined as “free speech” in the broadest sense, appears for the first time in Greek literature in Euripides and occurs throughout the ancient Greek world of letters from the end of the fifth century B.C (Foucault, 2001: 11). By tracing the evolution of

the word parrhesia, Foucault attributes five properties - frankness, truth, danger, criticism, duty - to parrhesia. First, the parrhesiastes (the one who practices parrhesia) does not hide anything. In parrhesia, the speaker should be honest with him or herself first of all, and then “act on other people’s minds by showing them as directly as possible what he actually believes” (p.12). Rhetoric that obscures what the parrhesiastes believes and disguises what s/he does is in opposition to parrhesia. Second, the parrhesiastes tells the truth. What is crucial here is not whether or not the truth is scientifically proven but “an exact coincidence between belief and truth” (p.14). Parrhesia is the act of telling candidly what s/he believes. It also should be mentioned here that Foucault makes a distinction between parrhesia in a positive sense and parrhesia in a pejorative sense. The former consists in telling the truth without concealment, whereas the latter involves saying whatever comes to mind (Foucault, 2011: 9-10). But, how can we distinguish truth-telling from chattering? Foucault answers that courage is “a kind of proof of the sincerity of the parrhesiastes” (2001: 15). Courage is of particular importance to the parrhesiastes, because there is always a risk in telling the truth. This implies that parrhesia takes place in asymmetrical relations such as the relationship between a tyrant and a philosopher who tells that tyranny is incompatible with justice. In spite of some danger, the parrhesiastes “prefers himself as a truth-teller rather than as a living being who is false to himself” (p.17). Danger and courage are the third property of parrhesia. Fourth, “parrhesia is a form of criticism” (p.17). The truth-teller is in a position of inferiority, reflects on his/her own status, and voluntarily takes a risk. Parrhesia is not to demonstrate truth or give advice to the one with whom he speaks, but to criticize courageously someone in power. Fifth, it is not

mandatory to speak the truth, which means that the parrhesiastes can keep silent if s/he wants. Yet, the parrhesiastes is willing to use his/her freedom to take a risk in telling the truth, because s/he “recognizes parrhesia as a duty to improve or help other people as well as himself” (p.19). Below is Foucault’s summarization of parrhesia.

In parrhesia, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy.

(Foucault, 2001: 19-20)

Parrhesia, as the courage to tell the truth, however, had different meanings, uses, and functions historically. When the word parrhesia is used for the first time in six tragedies of Euripides (*The Phoenician Women*, *Hippolytus*, *The Bacchae*, *Electra*, *Ion*, *Orestes*), it is generally seen as an essential characteristic of Athenian democracy. For example, in the *Phoenician Women*, a life without parrhesia (the right of free speech or criticism) is described a slave’s life, because “if citizens cannot use parrhesia, they cannot oppose a ruler’s power” (p.29). Parrhesia is also considered as a virtue of a wise ruler. In *The Bacchae*, a wise ruler is the one who joins the parrhesiastic game, grants his servant permission to speak openly, and promises not to punish his servant for telling the truth (p.32). The political parrhesia is well presented in *Ion* that is about a foreigner’s journey to gain a legal status as an Athenian citizen and, as a result, to speak the truth against the god’s silence. The story of *Ion* shows that “parrhesia is thus not a right given equally to all Athenian

citizens, but only to those who are especially prestigious through their family and their birth” (p.51). However, Foucault discovers and highlights the crisis of the political parrhesia in Orestes where parrhesia is used in a pejorative sense. According to Foucault, the crisis has two major aspects. First, the problem is the possibility that parrhesia could be used by the worst citizens or flatterers in an egalitarian system, that is, democracy where everyone is entitled to speak openly. Second, this means that “parrhesia in and of itself is no longer considered adequate to disclose the truth” (p.73). Parrhesia began to be considered as something to be trained and educated. It is in this context that parrhesia becomes increasingly related to a personal quality and the choice of one’s way of life rather than a political/institutional right (p.85).

Foucault examines the transformation of the political parrhesia into the ethical or philosophical (Socratic) parrhesia by turning to Plato’s Laches. In the Laches, two elderly men, Lysimachus and Melesias, are worried about their sons’ education and in particular wonder “how we can distinguish the good, truth-telling teachers from the bad or inessential ones?” (p.93). They decide to ask respected generals, Nicias and Laches, for help, but Nicias and Laches are also unable to reach a consensus on what is a good education. So, Nicias and Laches agree that they should refer to Socrates. In Nicias’ explanation, we can find Socrates as the archetype of an ethical/philosophical parrhesiastes. Most of all, Socrates leads the listener to give an account of him/herself.

Giving an account of your life, your bios, is also not to give a narrative of the historical events that have taken place in your life, but rather to demonstrate whether you are able to show that there is a relation between the rational discourse, the logos, you are able to use, and the way that you live. Socrates is inquiring into the way that logos gives form to a person's style of life; for he is interested in discovering whether there is a harmonic relation between the two.

(Foucault, 2001: 97)

In a similar fashion, Laches also says that there is “a harmonic relation between what Socrates says and what he does” (p.100). The nomos(law)-logos relation is no longer central to parrhesia as it was before. What becomes crucial instead is the bios(life)-logos relation. The philosophical parrhesiastes is the one who does not provide his/her interlocutors with the absolute knowledge (the truth) but encourage them to attend to what takes place in their thought and how they lead their lives. Instead of the theme of the gnōthi seauton (know yourself), the theme of the epimeleia heautou (care of the self) permeates all Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman philosophy, as well as Christian spirituality, up to the fourth and fifth centuries A.D (Foucault, 2005: 11). The Cynic life is a radical version of an attempt to accord what s/he thinks with what s/he does. The Cynic life is scandalous and radical because “it breaks totally and on every point with the traditional forms of existence, with the philosophical existence that philosophers were accustomed to accepting, with their habits and conventions” (Foucault, 2011: 245). However, we can also say that the cynic life is independent and truthful from the fact that Cynics make a constant effort to think of the self, others, and im/possible modes of existence (p.310-312). Parrhesia is an ethic of and the practice of “discomfort” to be myself (Foucault, 2000: 443-448, cited in Gordon, 2009: xxiii).

Foucault's discussions of parrhesia provide fertile ground for exploring efforts to resist the neutralization of education. Ironically speaking, war-politics that delimits what is say-able and do-able and censors what is said and done in the name of protecting society, is the source of parrhesiastic resistance. In effect, despite the risk of physical, symbolic, and institutional punishment, a number of efforts have been made by teachers and students to speak against and rupture the arbitrary distinction between what is and what is not possible educationally. There have been many teachers who play a role as the parrhesiastes in practicing the scandal of the truth in and through their lives. Those teachers do not confine their task to transmitting theoretical knowledge to students. Instead, they endeavour to accord what they believe with what they do, and therefore to awaken people in a status of "stultitia", that is, "a disconnection between the will and the self" (Foucault, 2005: 133). According to Foucault, an act of helping people to get out of the status of stultitia is

A certain action carried out on the individual to who one offers a hand and whom one extricates from the condition, status, mode of life and being in which exists (...). It is a sort of operation focused on the mode of being of the subject himself, and not just the transmission of knowledge capable of taking the place of or replacing ignorance.

(Foucault, 2005: 134)

Chapter Seven deals with teachers' words and deeds in relation to parrhesiastic resistance. But, I also shed light on students' parrhesiastic resistance in Chapter Seven. There have existed students who refuse the idea that neutral education is

necessary for immature and vulnerable students. By telling what they believe openly without concealment, students insist that not only are they eligible citizens to speak freely (the political parrhesia) but also education is an act of connecting the word with the world in an atmosphere of freedom (the philosophical parrhesia).

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have developed an analytical framework through which to investigate the conservative use of educational neutrality in South Korea. I began by contextualizing the conservative use of educational neutrality in relation to war-politics. Kim Dong-choon's conception of war-politics offers, I have argued, a critical perspective through which to think critically about the function of educational neutrality in the stark reality that Korean society has still faced to date, despite the transition to democracy. The stark reality means the situation in which critical thought and action are punished and regulated in the name of protecting society. As later chapters demonstrate, educational neutrality functions as legal and discursive grounds for restricting critical thought and action in the field of education.

However, I also have brought Foucault's work into a framework through which to examine the dynamics of war-politics. War-politics modifies its strategies to work effectively, along with other social structural changes. For example, war-politics does not resort only to repressive mechanisms particularly in a democratic and neo-

liberal society. Although critical thought and action are still suppressed forcefully, they are, however, regulated in seemingly ‘neutral’ ways in most cases. To individualise teachers through the trap of competition is to prevent teachers from thinking critically and acting collectively. Yet, I would like to reiterate that the repressive use of educational neutrality coexists with the neo-liberal use of educational neutrality. These social and political considerations are picked up in Chapters Five and Six. In the final section of this chapter, I have addressed the issue of resistance to war-politics in general and the myth of neutral education in particular in a theoretical way by using Foucault’s discussions of parrhesia. Against a “politics of silence” that war-politics promotes, teachers and students have not stopped speaking critically and freely (Giroux, 1988: 19). In Chapter Seven, I illuminate courageous speeches that introduce a break in war-politics that draws an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able.

In the next chapter, I present the methods that I chose to address these theoretical concerns. The importance of discursive practice to the use of educational neutrality is particularly discussed. However, it is also evident that discursive and non-discursive practices are closely intertwined.

CHAPTER THREE. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

No one theory is universally right or universally applicable. Each theory offers tools which work better for some kinds of data than they do for others. Furthermore, anyone engaged in their own discourse analysis must adapt the tools they have taken from a given theory to the needs and demands of their own study.

(Gee, 2011: ix)

Since, as history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized.

(Foucault, 1970: 52-53)

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methods with which to address the concerns of this study. Methods, however, do not exist as end products ready to be selected and applied in a mechanical way. This is especially pertinent given that “educational contexts are inevitably varied, dynamic, interrelated, and over-determined” (Eisenhart, 2006: 700). Hence, methods are and should be re/constructed in consonance with research objectives and questions. But, I begin the chapter with a positionality statement, because my experiences, beliefs, disciplinary backgrounds, and so on have a huge impact on the research process.

Then, bearing the importance of theoretical construction of method (methodology) in mind, I explain the necessity of a discursive approach to the problem of educational neutrality (Section Three). However, there are a wide range of different methods and methodologies within the tradition of discourse analysis. Amongst them, I particularly choose Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the primary research methodology. Of course, as Wodak & Meyer state, “studies in CDA are multifarious, derived from quite different theoretical backgrounds, oriented towards different data and methodologies” (2009: 5). In the fourth section, I discuss the suitability of CDA for this study in general and of Fairclough’s version of CDA in particular. But again, CDA is not a one-size-fits-all method. In the fifth section, by combining CDA with Foucault’s genealogical approach, I set up a more relational framework for investigating the link between discursive practices and non-discursive practices. In the sixth section, I then consider some of issues as to data collection and sketch out the key socio-political events in the post 1987 period.

2. POSITIONALITY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS

It is important to be aware of the researcher’s values, beliefs, and experiences (positionality) having a profound influence on the whole process of the research. Social scientists, in particular, need to consider their positionality given that researchers, research objects, and research itself are “socially situated” (Harding, 1991: 159). As critical realism explains, the social world that social scientists deal

with is not a “closed system” like a natural science laboratory but an “open system” where human activities and social conditions work together through various causal mechanisms across time and space (Sayer, 2000: 10-28). So, it is barely possible to carry out a research independently from personal and social conditions. However, it is also true that doing a research is and should be different from making a political manifesto that certain views are suggested one-sidedly, for example. That is, even though strict value-free objectivity that is required for natural scientists cannot be achievable in the social sciences, social scientists should consider their positionality thoroughly so as to make their research more ‘objective’ and thus discuss-able in the scientific field. By objective, I mean what Harding calls “strong objectivity” (Harding, 1991: 138-163). Rejecting a dichotomy between objectivism and judgmental relativism, Harding calls upon researchers to examine the social location of researchers and existing scientific claims.

They (the standpoint epistemologies) call for the acknowledgment that all human beliefs – including our best scientific beliefs – are socially situated, but they also require a critical evaluation to determine which social situations tend to generate the most objective knowledge claims. They require, as judgmental relativism does not, a scientific account of the relationships between historically located belief and maximally objective belief. So they demand what I shall call strong objectivity in contrast to the weak objectivity of objectivism and its mirror-linked twin, judgmental relativism. This may appear to be circular reasoning – to call for scientifically examining the social location of scientific claims – but if so, it is at least not viciously circular.

(Harding, 1991: 142)

In the remaining of this section, I reflect on my personal and disciplinary journey that affects the research process. First, my school experiences have led me to have critical perspectives on Korean education. I had spent most of my school life on preparing to enter the prestigious universities, as most Korean students still do. It was a time fraught with anger and frustration precisely because there were too many things that I was not allowed to do in school. The only thing that I could and should do was preparing the national college entrance exam. For me, schools are not the places of possibility but the places of impossibility and, more precisely, prohibition. This is not irrelevant to the fact that I wrote my master's thesis about students who could not have an opportunity to share their school and daily life problems in schools and finally came to drop out of schools. After completing my master's course, I made a decision to do a PhD abroad to have a good grasp of the problem of Korean education. In 2014 when I was in the first year of my PhD course and the Sewol ferry disaster took place, I was immersed in 'critical pedagogy' claiming that rather than being neutral, education should serve to open up and extend the possibility of teachers' and students' different experiences and knowledge in an atmosphere of freedom. Not only did critical pedagogy open my eyes to critical and political role of education, but also it helped me to pick up the matter of neutrality as a thesis topic. Despite the usefulness of critical pedagogy in thinking of the matter of neutral education in general, critical pedagogy, however, is not enough to explain why educational neutrality emerges repeatedly as a problem in South Korea. Thus, in Chapter Two, I contextualise the Korean use of educational neutrality in relation to war-politics. My sociological background was particularly

helpful in seeing the matter of educational neutrality in South Korea as a complex of socio-political practices rather than a mere educational issue.

To choose research methods also cannot be a perfectly objective process. My critical stance, in particular, affects the way in which I see and analyse social phenomena. Again, I am in large agreement with critical realism that a social phenomenon consists of various dimensions (the empirical, the actual, and the real level) that have different working mechanisms⁸. This implies that in order to critically analyse a social phenomenon, it is necessary to think of what kinds of research methods are most suitable for capturing the characteristics of each dimension. This is why I decided to combine Critical Discourse Analysis with genealogy. Despite the difficulty of the linguistic analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis helps me to clarify how educational neutrality is used on the empirical level. And, such empirical evidence provided by critical discourse analysis can be a starting point to consider more complex aspects of the matter of educational neutrality. In order for something to emerge as a social phenomenon on the surface (the empirical level), more structural and causal powers need to work on the actual and the real level. So, after doing a discursive analysis of educational neutrality, I attempt to uncover socio-political mechanisms and historical events that make the discourse of educational neutrality operative. In doing so, Foucault's genealogical approach that highlights the importance of historical and political relations of a

⁸ Critical realism distinguishes between the real, the actual, and the empirical level of the social world. Whereas the real refers to the structures and power of objects, the actual refers to what happens if and when those powers are activated, to what they do and what eventuates when they do. The empirical is defined as the domain of experience or observation (Sayer, 2000: 11-12).

social phenomenon is particularly useful. In the following sections, I will give a detailed account of each of the research methods that I choose.

3. THE DISCOURSE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY

In preceding chapters, I suggested that to better understand the problem of educational neutrality, it is necessary to see it as a complex of socio-political practices. This is due in part to the fact that there are no determinate meanings and elements to which the concept of educational neutrality is related. As an “empty signifier”, educational neutrality provides a place where hegemonic struggles and mobilisations take place (see Laclau, 1996: 36-46 for the relation between signifiers and politics). Namely, different forces are competing in their efforts to occupy the empty and ambiguous space of educational neutrality for their own sake. What I would like to highlight here is that the struggle for neutral education is a discursive phenomenon bound up with socio-political practices.

On the one hand, those who make the use of educational neutrality in any sense cannot avoid re-defining and re-contextualising it from the beginning to the end, because of the ambiguity of the term educational neutrality. Language use, in particular, plays a crucial role in the identification process of educational neutrality. In order to specify ‘proper’ meanings, objects, and uses of educational neutrality, various concepts, statements, and linguistic strategies are mobilised. And, existing socio-political structures are implicated, to a great degree, in the use of language.

For example, the South Korean war-political situation in which the socio-political spectrum is extremely polarised between friend (the right) and enemy (the left) is not irrelevant to the extensive use of belligerent vocabularies in the discourse of educational neutrality (see Chapter Two for war-politics). But, the use of language also produces the specific reality with which the concept of educational neutrality is associated. That is, the linguistic identification process is the process of delimiting what should be thought and what should be done at a particular time. As Chapters Five and Six demonstrate, it is not a coincidence that teachers' unions and history textbooks are problematised in terms of educational neutrality at a certain point in a specific way. To recap, the linguistic use of educational neutrality not only reflects the social but also constitutes the social. And, there is no doubt that the social embeddedness of language is a distinguishing characteristic of CDA. Following CDA, I interpret discourse not as a form of self-contained linguistic practice but as "a form of social practice" (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258).

On the other hand, it is important to stress the discourse of educational neutrality always has a mutual relationship with non-discursive practices. Governmental agencies, media, laws, social groups and so on are important factors in the working of the discourse of educational neutrality. A number of interrelated discourses and practices are working together at a specific time and place with the intent of making education more neutral. Thus, together with the attention to discourses regarding educational neutrality, we should also raise questions about their realisation; Who decides what is and what is not neutral education on what grounds? What measures are taken to eradicate non-neutral education? What is the short-term and long-term

effects of those practices? Here I want to make a brief mention of my methodological failure. Initially, I tried to do an ethnographic research on how the discourse of educational neutrality comes into play inside the school and how teachers internalise the idea of neutral education. However, my attempt ended up in a failure mainly due to the fact that there were immense difficulties in gaining permission from schools for participant observation. I was also incapable of making teachers whom I interviewed express their thought openly about politics, education, neutrality and so on. The failure, however, let me think more about the ‘successful’ realisation of the discourse of educational neutrality through a myriad of non-discursive practices.

The relationship between discursive and non-discursive practices is elaborated in greater detail by Foucault. With introducing the term “apparatus (*dispositif*)”, Foucault locates the problem of discourse within the problem of its (non-discursive) historico-political formation and effects (1977b). By Foucault’s definition, the apparatus means “a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions” (p.194). What is at issue here is that the heterogeneous elements of the apparatus are constantly re-articulated over time in strategical ways that maximise the effect of a particular discourse. Foucault calls this kind of methodological approach to the complex interlinkages between discourse and history/power “genealogy” (1977a: 117).

In what follows, I detail the ways in which I understand and use both CDA and genealogy as the core methodological approaches to the discourse of educational neutrality. Of course, there is a gap between CDA and genealogy. For example, whilst CDA remains attentive to linguistic properties of texts, genealogy places a greater emphasis on minute historical events. Nonetheless, I believe that the difference could be utilised as complementary to each other, as Anaïs pertinently points out that:

First, the combination of genealogy and CDA serves to redress the ahistoricism apparent in much critical discourse analytic work. Second, genealogy is clarified and strengthened by some of the systematic elements involved in carrying out CDA.

(Anaïs, 2013: 123)

4. FAIRCLOUGH'S CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In spite of the diversity of CDA, what its many adherents have in common is the idea that discourse is “an element or moment of the social world” (Mulderriig, 2006: 15). It is thus “not interested in a linguistic unit per se”, even though CDA is obviously one of the sub-disciplines of linguistics (Wodak & Meyer, 2009: 2). Instead, CDA pays attention to how texts, talks, and even visual images are socially constituted in different “contexts” and how they “represent” social elements differently (see Dijk, 2008; Leeuwen, 2008). Specifically, the political dimensions of discourse are the main focus of CDA. Wodak, for instance, throws light on the ways in which politics is performed in discursive ways in the field of politics (“front

stage”) as well as in everyday life (“backstage”) (2009). In a study of the relationship between ideology and discourse, Dijk also reveals that rather than directly expressing themselves in discourse, ideologies permeate grammatical structures or strategies (e.g. polarised lexicalisation of political actors and demeaning metaphors), whereby “discourse functions to persuasively help construct new and confirm already present ideologies” (1999: 22).

For this study, I employ CDA that is developed particularly by Fairclough (1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 2003; 2010). This is in part due to the fact that Fairclough most distinctively puts an emphasis on the relationship between discourse and “social wrongs” (2010: 23). In previous chapters, I made clear that the use of the concept of educational neutrality cannot be reduced simply to an educational problem. Rather, I consider the discursive use of educational neutrality by conservative forces in terms of its detrimental effects on society as well as education. Another reason why I select Fairclough’s version of CDA is because he offers a ‘macro’ tool to analyse “dialectical relations between discourse and other objects, elements or moments, as well as the internal relations of discourse” (Fairclough, 2010: 4). Especially, “a three-dimensional conception of discourse” is very useful in exploring the links between socio-political practice and language (1992a: 73). According to him, discourse can be analysed at three different but interrelated levels (textual, discursive, and social practice). At the level of textual practice, linguistic organisation of text is the main object of analysis. More specifically, text analysis can be carried out under the four categories, i.e. “vocabulary”, “grammar”,

“cohesion”, and “text structure”. Fairclough defines each of categories as below (p.75).

Vocabulary deals mainly with individual words, grammar deals with words combined into clauses and sentences, cohesion deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together, and text structure deals with large-scale organizational properties of texts.

Both my basic interest in what conservative forces want to say by neutral education and my background in sociology lead me to pay more attention to text structure of the discourse of educational neutrality, instead of doing a complex linguistic analysis. Text structure concerns “what elements or episodes are combined in what ways and what order”, according to Fairclough (pp.77-78). Given the emptiness of the concept of educational neutrality, to examine what elements constitute the discourse of educational neutrality in what ways is a rudimentary but necessary part of the study. Of course, if necessary, other elements structuring text will be investigated. For instance, vocabulary use (wording process) is a relatively clear indicator of what happens in discourse. In Chapter Four, I find out many differences between the ways in which ‘neutral’ and ‘non-neutral education’ are worded.

At the level of discursive practice, the important thing to consider is processes of “text production, distribution, and consumption” (p.78). Different discourse genres (e.g. news articles, face-to-face interviews, TV advertisements, and so on) have their own ways to produce, distribute, and consume text and discourse. Various social and communicative contexts also affect the ways in which text is produced

and interpreted. Hence, it is crucial to be conscious of the fact that a discourse could have its various contents and forms, and they change over time and space. The term “intertextuality” accurately capture the changing nature of discourse. According to Fairclough (pp.101-105), the term was coined by Kristeva (1986) in the late 1960s, but the development of an intertextual approach to texts was a major theme of Bakhtin (1986). The key point of the notion of intertextuality is “the inherent historicity of texts” (Fairclough, 1992a: 102). Texts are not produced in a vacuum, but they “transform prior texts and restructure existing conventions to generate new ones” (ibid.). Building on hegemony theory, Fairclough takes the historical approach to texts further. That is, so long as the historical formation of texts is constrained by relations of power, it should be understood as processes of hegemonic struggle to restructure “orders of discourse” (p.103). As Fairclough himself notes, this line of thought accords with Foucault’s view of discourse:

Discourses are tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of force relations; there can exist different and even contradictory discourses within the same strategy; they can, on the contrary, circulate without changing their form from one strategy to another, opposing strategy.

(Foucault, 1978: 101-102, cited in Fairclough, 1992a: 99)

The intertextual or interdiscursive⁹ approach is helpful for the investigation into how and why different concepts and objects have been brought together at a specific time in different forms of the discourse of educational neutrality. Furthermore, the

⁹ The two terms interdiscursivity and intertextuality are used interchangeably by Fairclough on the ground that intertextuality includes not only the incorporation of texts but also the configuration of discourse conventions (1992a: 104).

interest in orders of discourse prompts us to see discourse as “a stake in power struggle” as well as “a site of power struggle” (Fairclough, 1992a: 67). In other words, orders of discourse are the result of broader socio-political hegemonic struggle and discursive practices play a crucial role in renewing the existing orders of discourse and, by extension, social orders. The social practice of discourse (particularly ideologies and power relations) is the third dimension in Fairclough’s three-dimensional framework. Despite his awareness of the social nature of discourse, Fairclough, however, does not provide a framework for investigating it. Generally speaking, CDA ‘still’ tends to place too much emphasis on text in which social elements are embedded. Yet, Fairclough and many adherents of CDA are also mindful that CDA should be a “transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and other elements of the social process” (2010: 10). In the next section, I examine Foucault’s genealogical approach in order to complement CDA which is linguistically oriented.

5. FOUCAULT’S GENEALOGY

There is certainly a wide range of similarities between CDA and Foucault’s work on discourse. Fundamentally, they reject the idea of discourse as a closed linguistic system. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault defines discourse as “a group of statements” and, more importantly, pays special attention to the rules of discourse formation (1972: 117). For Foucault, the unity of a discourse is the result of “the interplay of the rules that make possible the appearance of objects during a

given period of time”, not the result of “the permanence and uniqueness of an object” (pp.32-33). Both CDA and Foucault thus refuse to “neutralize discourse”, in Foucault’s words and instead shed light on discursive ‘practice’ (p.47). As I examined in the previous section, the main concern of CDA is the interaction between textual, discursive and social practice. Similarly, Foucault understands discursive practice as “a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period, and for a given social, economic, geographical, or linguistic area, the conditions of operation of the enunciative function” (p.117). Despite the same focus of CDA and Foucault on discursive practices, it seems evident to me that Foucault’s genealogy provides us a more useful tool to carry out historico-political analysis of them than CDA.

Let me begin with Foucault’s definition of genealogy. According to Foucault, genealogy is:

A form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc., without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history.

(Foucault, 1977c: 117)

From the definition, we can immediately infer the significance of historical constitution of discourse in genealogy. Even more important is the fact that genealogy focuses on revealing discontinuities rather than transcendental continuities in the constituting process of discourse. With regards to the

genealogical principle of discontinuity, Foucault declared in his inaugural lecture at the College de France that “we must not imagine that there is a great unsaid or a great unthought which runs throughout the world and intertwines with all its forms and all its event” (1970: 67). He went on say that “discourse must be treated as discontinuous practices, which cross each other, are sometimes juxtaposed with one another, but can just as well exclude or be unaware of each other” (ibid.). In contrast to CDA and Foucault’s archaeology that remain attentive to “local discursivities” such as the regularity of statements, genealogy brings our attention to meticulous historical events or struggles for re-producing orders of discourses (Foucault, 2003: 10-11). And this is why Foucault adopts a methodological approach which is called “eventalization” (1991). Foucault urges us to cease seeking “the most unitary, necessary, inevitable and (ultimately) extra-historical mechanism” and to “rediscover the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on which at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal and necessary” (pp.76-78). In Chapter Two, it is reasonably assumed that the demand for neutral education has been part of war-political practices to shrink space for critical thinking and action since the 1987 democratisation in South Korea. In this study, taking up the genealogical approach, I trace historical conjunctures at which the discourse of educational neutrality emerges as a problem in its various forms.

In addition to the historical and constitutive nature of discourse, central to genealogy is the relationship between power and discourse. Indeed, how knowledge, discourse, and power operate is the salient theme in many Foucault’s

later genealogical work (1977a; 1978a; 2003; 2007; 2008). “It is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together”, asserts Foucault (1978a: 100). Borrowing the distinction between “the power *over* discourse” and “the power *of* discourse” from Jäger & Maier, I would like to make three points about the relation of power to discourse in genealogy (Jäger & Maier, 2009: 37-39). The first is the power over discourse. As I mentioned in the second section of this chapter, discursive practices go hand in hand with non-discursive practices that already embody existing power relations. Different types of non-discursive practices differ in capacity to produce effects. Hence, it is important to discover different power relations and strategies through which a certain discourse can come into play at a given time and place. In this study, I particularly draw on Foucault’s genealogical studies of various techniques of power in order to understand the ‘productive’ exercise of power over discourse (see Chapter Two for more about Foucault’s work on power). The second is the power of discourse. Discourse does not simply express power relations but exerts power by “determining the problems of a society at a particular time” and drawing the line between the normal (possible) and the abnormal (impossible) (Foucault, 2003; Lazzarato, 2009). In *The History of Sexuality* (1978a), Foucault, for instance, demonstrates that the proliferation of discourses concerning sex since the seventeenth century gives rise to a number of practical changes such as various legal sanctions, medical treatments, and pedagogical controls. The genealogical approach allows us to reflect on tangible and intangible power effects that discourses produce in many different ways. The third point that I want to make is not directly related to discourse. Rather It is about the relationship between power and genealogy itself. Insofar as Foucault’s

genealogical project is understood as an effort to excavate “subjugated knowledges”, genealogy itself serves as a counter-power to fight “against centralizing power-effects that are bound up with the institutionalization and workings of any scientific discourse organised in a society” (Foucault, 2003: 7-9). In the same vein, Koopman is right to construe “genealogy as critique” (2013). For Foucault, critique consists in not only “questioning truth concerning its power effects” but also “questioning power about its discourses of truth”, whereby “what is taken for granted is no longer taken for granted” (1978b: 386; 1981: 456). Critique also goes further by “tracing possible ways of thinking differently, instead of accepting and legitimating what are already the ‘truths’ of our world” (Tamboukou, 1999: 203). In agreement with Foucault and his genealogical approach, I ‘problematise’ the discourse of educational neutrality by revealing its historical and political constitutive nature as well as counter-discourses.

What I tried to do from the beginning was to analyze the process of “problematization” - which means: how and why certain things (behavior, phenomena, processes) became a problem... I have tried to show that it was precisely some real existent in the world which was the target of social regulation at a given moment. The question I raise is this one: how and why were very different things in the world gathered together, characterized, analyzed, and treated as, for example, “mental illness”? What are the elements which are relevant for a given “problematization”?

(Foucault, 2001: 171)

6. DATA AND EVENTS

In order to critically investigate the discourse of educational neutrality, I utilise both CDA and genealogy. Firstly, I explore the textual dimension of the discourse of educational neutrality by examining newspaper editorials (Chapter Four). Secondly, I locate the discourse of educational neutrality within the specific historico-political events and examine how the discourse of educational neutrality is realised by various techniques of power (Chapters Five and Six). Last but not least, I reflect on the implications of counter-discourses to the discourse of educational neutrality by analysing, in the words of Foucault (2001), “fearless speeches” delivered by teachers and students (Chapter Seven). In this section, I outline the data collection process for the textual analysis and some of the key events in the time period examined in this study.

Data Collection: Newspaper Editorials

In Chapter One, I argued that educational neutrality is the language of conservatives. It is conservative politicians and media that produce and distribute most of the discourse of educational neutrality. The core objective of the study is thus to grasp the conservative use of educational neutrality. The textual analysis of newspaper editorials is a starting point of the study. In comparison to political speeches that are more or less impromptu actions, the news media, in general, address the problem of neutral education in a rather organised and consistent way. In addition, I take the political nature of the news media into consideration. Despite the expectation of the news media to be objective, they are inherently political in the sense that they manufacture social realities through various processes, thereby

affecting the ways in which we think and act (see Dijk, 1998; Halls et al., 1978; Whitney et al., 2004). Newspaper editorials are probably the most political section of the news media. According to Dijk, editorials consists of 1) summary of the event, 2) evaluation of the event, and 3) pragmatic conclusion (recommendation, advice, warning) (1992: 244). To put it simply, editorials do not simply tell what happened. In editorials, specific issues are chosen and specific views of them are expressed.

Let me now turn to data collection. First, through the online news media archive system, BIGKinds (www.bigkinds.or.kr), I gathered editorials that contain the terms neutral education or educational neutrality at least once. They were published between 01.01.1987 and 31.12.2017 (see the next section for the explanation of the time period). Second, I read through all the editorials very closely and then selected the most relevant 188 editorials according to the analytic focuses. Editorials about religious or military neutrality were excluded, for example. At this preliminary stage, I could confirm that the majority of editorials (134 editorials) raising the problem of non-neutral education came from conservative newspapers such as the Donga-Ilbo and Segye Times. It was also revealed that specific issues like teachers (union activity) (88 editorials), history textbooks (48 editorials), and the election of superintendent of education (39 editorials) were discussed intensively in the selected editorials. Lastly, I narrowed down the range of the textual corpus for the study to 50 editorials published from the Donga-Ilbo, in order to concentrate on the conservative use of educational neutrality. The Donga Ilbo is one of the three most influential conservative daily newspapers in South Korea, together with the

Chosun-Ilbo and the Joongang-Ilbo. As of 2016, the newspaper (net-paid) circulation was 729,414, which was the second largest amongst the national daily newspapers (Korea Audit Bureau of Certification, 2017). In Chapter Four, through the critical discursive analysis of the gathered data, I provide empirical evidence that, contrary to the theoretical ideal of neutral education, educational neutrality is discursively used in practice in ways that restrict critical thought and action in the field of education. My findings in Chapter Four particularly demonstrate that there is a close link between war-politics and the discursive construction of educational neutrality.

Eventalisation: Democratisation, Neo-liberalisation, and Neo-conservatisation

Eventalization means rediscovering the connections, encounters, supports, blockages, plays of forces, strategies and so on which at a given moment establish what subsequently counts as being self-evident, universal and necessary.

(Foucault, 1991: 76)

This study covers a large time span of thirty years (1987-2017). Hence, it seems necessary to sketch out some of the important political and educational events in the time period examined. The thing that I want to stress through the “eventalization” of the problem of educational neutrality is that new subjects and objects began to be problematised in different ways in relation to educational neutrality. In Chapters Five and Six, Seven, I examine not only why and how neutrality of teachers and textbooks become a particular issue within the context of the operation and transformation of war-politics but also how neutral education that

is taken for granted is no longer taken for granted by teachers and students in the course of the events.

I divide the time period into three. First, the June Democratic Uprising and the establishment of the KTU (1987-1999). The June Democratic Uprising of 1987 was the most decisive factor in ending the long-lasting military dictatorship. The death by torture of a student named Park Jong-cheol sparked a storm of protest against the Chun Doo-hwan government (1980-1988). Along with the demand for a thorough investigation into the death of Park Jong-cheol, the opposition forces called on the President to revise the Constitution that states an indirect presidential election system. However, President Chun Doo-hwan prohibited people from discussing the amendment of the Constitution through an official statement published on 13th of April 1987. To make matters worse, it was exposed that the official report on Park Jong-cheol's death was distorted and covered up. Consequently, the opposition forces jointly decided to hold national rallies around the country on 10th of June 1987. Approximately 240,000 people took part in demonstrations on that day, and the police arrested 3,800 protestors nationwide (Seo Joong-seok, 2007: 280). During June, demonstrations continued and intensified particularly after another student, Yi Han-yeol, was fatally wounded by a tear gas grenade in the midst of a protest rally. On 29th of June 1987, Roh Tae-woo, the presidential candidate of the ruling party at the time, announced that he would recommend President Chun Doo-hwan to take democratic measures including the introduction of direct election of the President. President Chun Doo-hwan accepted the suggestions a day after the 6.29 Declaration, and, as a

consequence, a presidential election was held in December 1987. Despite the fact that he heavily involved in a military coup in 1979 with Chun Doo-hwan, Roh Tae-woo was elected by a narrow margin as the new leader of the country (1988-1993). Meanwhile, the radical political upheavals motivated workers to organise a massive struggle to improve their working conditions, which is called the Workers's Great Struggle. As part of it, teachers were encouraged to found their labour union. However, conservative forces including newly elected President Roh Tae-woo strongly opposed it on the ground that teachers' union activity is a non-neutral political act. In spite of the legalisation of the KTU in 1999, the controversy over teachers' union activities has continued. This period is the point of departure of the study.

Secondly, the IMF crisis and the 5.31 Education Reform (1997-2008). If the June Democratic Uprising facilitated the political democratisation of South Korean society, the 1997 IMF Crisis was a watershed moment in Korean economic history. In 1997, South Korea faced an economic collapse on an unprecedented scale, and asked the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout package. The economic crisis has its multiple origins, causes, and tendencies (see Ji Joo-hyung, 2011). At the local level, the chaebols' (재벌, South Korean family-controlled conglomerates) risky investments for higher returns destabilised the economic structure, and the authoritarian developmental state system, based on "cronyism", i.e., "the lack of transparency about ties between government, business and banks", made it impossible to cope with the economic crises (Fischer, 1998: 3, cited in Chang Dae-oup, 2001: 185). At the international level, South Korea's export-led growth

strategy could no longer work due to increased competition in the global labour market. “South Korea’s export growth declined from 30 percent in 1995 to only 5 percent in 1996” (Hart-Landsberg & Burkett, 2001: 409). In addition, the South Korea government were forced by U.S. policy makers to deregulate and open South Korea’s financial system to foreign investors, which caused greater foreign debt (ibid.). In 1997, dozens of chaebols including Kia and Hanbo went bankrupt, both the unemployment and currency exchange rate skyrocketed, and share prices crashed to an all-time low. There seemed nothing for the South Korean government but to accept IMF’s economic aid and large-scale socio-economic restructuring programmes (e.g. labour market flexibilisation). The 1997 IMF Crisis was in stark contrast to the Kim Young-sam government’s (1993-1998) globalisation project. To raise global competitiveness was the primary goal of the Kim Young-sam government. The Globalisation Committee, which was organised in 1995, tried to transform all areas of society. Education was no exception. On 31st of May 1995, the initial education reform proposal was announced by the Presidential Commission on Education Reform (PCER). Principles for the new education system, which are documented in the proposal, are as below.

Schools are allowed to seek excellence based on autonomy and competition. Equality in access to quality education is realized by taking remedial measures for the areas and the segment of the population that are at a disadvantage. The quality of education will be monitored and maintained through a systematic evaluation process.

(PCER, 1997: 25)

The so-called 5.31 Education Reform is the most influential education reform in South Korea. Any other educational reforms that have been carried out by subsequent governments have not deviated much from the 5.31 Education Reform. In particular, a number of scholars do not hesitate to call the 5.31 Education Reform as neoliberal education reform. In Section Four of Chapter Five, I have a close look at the meaning and effect of the reform.

Thirdly, the rise of the new right and a textbook war (2008-2017). After the two 'left-wing' governments led by Kim Dae-jung (served: 1998-2003) and Roh Moo-hyun (served: 2003-2008), the two 'right-wing' presidents - Lee Myung-bak (served: 2008-2013) and Park Geun-hye (served: 2013-2017) - governed the country for ten consecutive years. The return of the conservatives could be possible thanks to the successful transformation of the old right into the new right. The inauguration of President Lee Myung-bak, who was a former CEO of Hyundai Engineering and Construction, one of the biggest companies in South Korea, was indicative of the rise of the new right. The new right is individual- and market-friendly, whereas the old right focuses on the national security like anti-communism (Cho Hee-yeon, 2008; Jeon Jae-ho, 2014; Yoon Min-jae, 2008). However, it is also important to stress that the new right governments actively used state power, intervened in social areas, and excluded those who did not favour them. One of the main targets of the new right is history textbooks. Soon after the inauguration of President Lee Myung-bak, one history book called the Alternative Textbook: Korean Modern and Contemporary History was published by a new right group Textbook Forum. Also, in 2015, the Park Geun-hye government announced a

change in the way of publishing history textbooks from the existing certification system to the state-publishing system. The reasons for the publication of the Alternative Textbook and the introduction of the state-published textbook are the same. That is, the existing history textbooks are too 'biased' and we need 'objective' history textbooks. Chapter Six is concerned with why and how, as a conservative politician says, the "history war" broke out and continued throughout the 2000s (Huffingtonpost, 2015).

7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have explained the methodology and methods central to this study. In order to critically investigate the discourse of educational neutrality, I have chosen CDA and genealogy. CDA allows us to reflect on how texts are socially constructed (discursive practices). However, genealogy is more interested in revealing the hidden links between discursive practices and non-discursive practices. The role of power in the realisation of a discourse is of particular importance to genealogy. Hence, if both methodological approaches are coupled well, it may be useful in illuminating the social, political, and historical constitution of the discourse. The discourse of educational neutrality has been produced and utilised in its various forms at multiple levels by different power mechanisms over time.

This chapter has also outlined the processes of gathering research data and provided some historical background information for a genealogical analysis. These data and events are not dealt with in a separate way. I also do not attempt to simply describe what data say or what happens. Instead, I use and interpret them with the help of the theoretical framework which was put forward in Chapter Two. Then I now turn to the textual analysis of newspaper editorials on educational neutrality. In doing so, I obtain empirical evidence of the constitution of the discourse of educational neutrality. The textual evidence will be relocated within broader historico-political events in Chapters Five and Six, so that I can bring to light the workings and effects of the discourse of educational neutrality.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE DISCOURSE OF EDUCATIONAL NEUTRALITY IN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

Protecting education from political contamination is a shortcut to effectively achieve functions and aims of education.

(Donga-Ilbo, 1990)

Discourse as a political practice is not only a site of power struggle, but also a stake in power struggle: discursive practice draws upon conventions which naturalize particular power relations and ideologies, and these conventions themselves, and the ways in which they are articulated, are a focus of struggle.

(Fairclough, 1992a: 67)

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to examine the way in which the concept of educational neutrality is discursively used by the news media. No one doubts the huge influence of the news media today. Most people routinely face social reality and form their perception of social reality through news (Botton, 2014). As Tuchman says, news is a “window on the world” (1978). Of course, it does not mean that news is a completely transparent window that mirrors everything as it is. Indeed, a great deal of literature demonstrates ways in which social reality is differently constructed,

and consequently, our perception of social reality is affected by the news media in relation to existing social structures, values, relations, and so on (Dijk, 1998; Halls et al., 1978: 53-77; Le, 2010; Whitney et al., 2004). For instance, in order to make certain events newsworthy, journalists necessarily maintain close relations with someone who has dependable “sources”, and they should “frame” such sources in a specific way within the fixed “time” schedules of news production (Whitney et al., 2004: 402-406). Thus, even though it is fair to say that factuality and impartiality are crucial in the production of news, news can never be reduced to events per se. Rather, news is “manufactured” (ibid.). Above all, by overemphasising or underestimating specific aspects of events implicitly and explicitly, news as a manufactured product contributes to the creation of particular socio-political condition, thereby having an impact on policymaking, individual perspectives, and so forth. Let me take one example. Public education is frequently defined in terms of “failure” or “crisis” in the news media, which serves to justify both neoliberal education reform that puts an emphasis on freedom, choice, and competition, and the state/market intervention in public education (Berliner and Biddle, 1995; Kang Jin-suk, 2006; Saltman, 2007; Seo Deok-hee, 2003; Slater, 2014; Stack, 2007).

As well as the huge influence of the news media in general, the political nature of the news media in particular is another reason for choosing them as sources for the study. In preceding chapters, I argued that the problem of educational neutrality should be seen as a discursive practice that is bound up with social and political practices. By excavating social problems and manufacturing them, the news media play a significant role in creating political reality. Oktar asserts that “the media

perform a function that is both ideological and political” (2001: 320, cited in Izadi & Saghaye-Biria, 2007: 142). Among other genres of the news media, editorials are particularly political. Editorials are “subjective” place where specific issues are selected and specific views are expressed rather than reporting what happens “objectively” (McQuail, 1992, cited in Seo Hee-jeong, 2013: 51). However, it is also not fair to say that editorials are entirely personal. Instead, “editorials will generally be shared among several editors, or between editors and management, or between editors and other social groups they belong to” (Dijk, 1996). Thus, editorials should be read as “the opinion of the newspaper” (ibid.). Below is Dijk’s explanation of several functions that editorials perform.

Editorials have several interactional, cognitive, socio-cultural and political functions. Firstly, in the framework of communicative interaction, they primarily have an argumentative and persuasive function: Newspaper editors thus intend to influence the social cognitions of the readers. Secondly, by doing so, editors try to reproduce their own (group) attitudes and ideologies among the public at large. Thirdly, however, editorials are usually not only, and even not primarily, directed at the ‘command reader’. On the contrary, they tend to directly or indirectly address influential news actors, viz., by evaluating the actions of such actors or by recommending alternative courses of action. Thus, the readers are rather observers than addressees of this type of discourse of one of the power elites, viz., the press, directed at other power elites, typically the politicians. This means, fourthly, that editorials are functioning politically as an implementation of power, that is, as strategic moves in the legitimation of the dominance of a specific elite formation (e.g., the government, the conservative party) or in the maintenance of power balances between different elite group in society. Their normative and ideological nature also has an important cultural function, viz., the persuasive formulation and reproduction of acceptable norms and values by which news events may be evaluated.

(Dijk, 1992: 244)

In the case of South Korea, despite the fact that the media are no longer directly subordinated to political power after the democratisation of 1987, the media have still played a role as a political agent with a strong political partisanship, (Choi Jin-ho & Han Dong-sub, 2012; Kim Dong-yoon et al., 2013). Again, it is not surprising that the media have certain political stance. However, what is at issue in South Korea is the fact that “the media blatantly use and reinforce their political partisanship for the purpose of improving their political position, which triggers a ‘crisis of communication’” (Choi Jin-ho & Han Dong-sub, 2012: 540). Especially, conservative news media, represented by Chosun-Ilbo, Jungang-Ilbo, and Donga-Ilbo, have developed by “attacking on as well as excluding progressive discourses in an extreme way” (Im Soon-mi, 2011: 276). Editorials are places where such blatant political partisanship of the news media is most distinctively expressed. For example, when progressive superintendents of education raised the issue of free school meals in 2011, conservative news media denounced it as a “curse of free” (Kim Dae-yong, 2014; Im Soon-mi, 2011: 264-275). Meanwhile, according to the study of progressive newspapers conducted by Lee Hang-woo, progressive news media have not effectively responded to the conservative news media’s attack on progressive discourses enough to develop their own identity or to have a meaningful effect (2012). This strengthens the “fundamentalist antagonism” between the left and the right, and causes the lack of “democratic agonistic politics” (ibid.).

Hence, in this chapter, I analyse the editorials collected from a conservative newspaper, the Donga-Ilbo, in order to see how educational neutrality is utilised in discursive and political ways. As I explained in the previous chapter, the Donga-Ilbo is one of the most influential conservative daily newspapers in South Korea, together with the Chosun-Ilbo and the Joongang-Ilbo. With regards to the issue of educational neutrality, the Donga-Ilbo has published the largest number of editorials, and its sister magazine Shin Donga carried out an in-depth analysis of educational neutrality in 2004. Additionally, according to an empirical study of the similarity and difference between South Korean major conservative newspapers, the Donga-Ilbo expresses the strongest conservative voice (Kim Sae-eun, 2010). I gathered the editorials that contain the terms “neutral” and “education” through the online news media archive system (www.bigkinds.or.kr) and selected the most relevant editorials according to the key objectives of the study. Finally, 50 editorials were analysed. If necessary, I refer to the in-depth analysis of educational neutrality done by the Shin Donga (see Chapter Three for more about methodological issues and the process of data collection).

The data will be analysed as follows. First, I focus on the structure of the selected editorials (Sections Two, Three, and Four). “What elements or episodes are combined in what ways?” (Fairclough, 1992a: 77). In Chapter One, I pointed out that the term educational neutrality is highly ambiguous and thus its meaning depends on who and how to use the term. Through an examination of the structure of the editorials, I provide a clearer picture of what the conservatives mean by neutral education. Second, I pay special attention to the use of metaphor in the

editorials (Section Five). Metaphors are widely used to explain ambiguous and controversial concepts and issues such as educational neutrality in an ordinary and thus persuasive way. In particular, metaphors affect implicitly how we perceive as well as what we do. But, above all, I focus on how war-politics exert an influence upon the textual and metaphorical construction of the discourse of educational neutrality (see Chapter Two for more detailed discussion on war-politics).

2. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

In Chapter One, I examined the previous literature on various kinds of neutrality in education. For instance, the neutral role of the state and teachers matters within the tradition of liberalism. This is because that the state and teachers are in a position to exert authority (Gardner, 1989; Waldren, 2013). How to teach controversial issues such as religion in schools is also important in the matter of educational neutrality (Stenhouse, 1968; 1971). In addition, I could pick out some specific issues as to educational neutrality from the case of the Sewol ferry tragedy in the introductory section of Chapter One. That is, the matter of educational neutrality in South Korea revolves around both teachers' union activity and what to teach (school knowledge). The result of the preliminary research on the selected editorials is consistent with these theoretical and empirical findings. That is, the vast majority of the selected editorials address the issues such as teachers' union activity school knowledge or history textbooks. Plus, after the election of the superintendent of education was introduced in 2006, many editorials raise the problem of the non-

neutral election process and some non-neutral superintendents of education. So, let me begin with the matter of non-neutral left-wing superintendent of education.

The superintendent of education has been elected by local constituents since the revision of the Local Education Autonomy Act in 2006. Before that, the president appointed or members of the board of education elected the superintendent of education. In the superintendent election, for the reason of protecting political neutrality of education, any political parties shall not recommend a candidate (Article 22 of the Local Education Autonomy Act). However, during the period of the superintendent election, controversy over political neutrality of education has been constantly aroused, not only because it is barely possible for individual candidates to completely hide their political tendency but also because electing the superintendent of education known as the “president of education” inevitably draws much political attention. The Donga-Ilbo has a somewhat ambivalent attitude towards the election of the superintendent of education. Before the introduction of the superintendent election, the appointment system was criticised in a couple of editorials for the possibility that the president or members of the board of education could select the superintendent of education privately and arbitrarily (Donga-Ilbo, 1996; 1998a). But, in more recently published editorials, the abolition of the superintendent election is advocated on the grounds that it is not possible to completely remove political factors from the superintendent election (Donga-Ilbo, 2014; 2015).

[Excerpt 1] below was part of the editorial that was published two days before the election of superintendent of education in 2008. According to Dijk, editorials, in general, consist of 1) definition of the situation (what happened?) 2) evaluation and 3) conclusion (expectations or normative opinions) (1992: 244). As such, the editorial below begins by informing the readers that the superintendent election is approaching, evaluates the problematic situations, and concludes by urging the readers to cast their votes for the “future of our children, education, and nation”.

Excerpt 1.

The election of the superintendent of the Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education is only two days away... Our education policies should be in line with the constitutional spirit, national identity and global trend of raising competitiveness in education. We need to improve the competitiveness of the next generation, so that they can stand on their own in the world. Education surrounded by anachronistic ideologies must be prevented because it produces ‘equal losers’... The superintendent of education, in particular, must be politically neutral (Clause 4, Article 31 of the Constitution). People who campaign in illegal candlelight vigils, insist on resignation of the democratically-elected president and repeat the argument of the pro-North left that the Korean War was not an invasion by the North, but a ‘Unification War’ are highly likely to offer education as a sacrifice to politics. A candidate supported by the Korean Teachers and Education Workers’ Union (KTU), the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) and other left-wing populists, if elected, may bring about a series of reforms that cater only to the needs of the union. Then, teachers will reject any evaluations of themselves with maintaining a vested interest in schools, whereby ‘lazy and irresponsible’ education, which destroys infinite potentials of students, will come into play under the slogan of egalitarian education.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2008b)

One of the most distinctive features of the selected editorials including the above editorial is that neutral education is taken for granted without any specific explanation. In other words, what it means by neutral education or how it can be achieved in different contexts is never specified. In the above example, the superintendent of education is urged to maintain neutrality simply on the ground of the Constitution. Article 31 of the Constitution (Clause 4), however, very abstractly states that “independence, professionalism and political neutrality of education and the autonomy of institutions of higher learning shall be guaranteed under the conditions as prescribed by Act.”

Instead, the selected editorials commonly devote much space to denouncing educators’ involvement in critical activities. For example, would-be superintendents’ participation in a protest turns into an act of “offering education as a sacrifice to politics”. In order to make the argument more persuasive, the editorial exaggerates the gravity of the problem of some violent protesters and labels the candlelight protests, which are very well known for its peaceful way of resisting¹⁰, as “illegal” (sweeping generalisation fallacy). The slogan, “resignation of the president”, is interpreted as an impending and real threat to the democratically and legally elected President. With deliberately bracketing the symbolic/political characteristic of and the background of the emergence of the slogan, the editorial calls attention only to the literal meaning of the slogan. Above all, the editorial associates inappropriate political behaviours of candidates with the problem of the

¹⁰ for more detailed analysis of the 2008 candlelight protests see Pang Hui-kyong, 2013.

left. According to the editorial, a candidate supported by trade unions is problematic, because they are left-wing populists who are only interested in maintaining a vested interest. A candidate who shares the idea of the “pro-North left” is likely to use education as a political tool. In most editorials, critical thought and action are regarded as non-neutral left-wing politics.

To recap, what it means to maintain neutrality in the very political process of the election of the superintendent of education is not clear in the editorial. There is no explanation of the neutral role of the superintendent of education independent of politics. Instead, the editorials concentrate on describing how leftist thoughts and actions are harmful to education. It is not surprising to discover such criticisms of the left in editorials of conservative newspapers, given the context of war-politics in which the left and the right are extremely divided. Especially, as Kim Dong-choon points out, if anti-communism functioned as a discursive device of war-politics in the past, the discourse of the pro-North left props up war-politics nowadays.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in 1989, anticommunism in the Western world lost ground. But the anti-communist Movement in South Korea outlived after 1989 as an anti-North Korean ideology.

(Kim Dong-choon, 2017: 2)

Whether it is called anti-communism or anti-North Korean ideology, most arguments of the editorials are made on the basis of the extreme division between the left and the right. And, all the critical things are subsumed under the category

of the pro-North leftist politics. Here educational neutrality serves as a ground for waging the war against non-neutral leftist education. This is particularly evident in the widespread use of military vocabularies like “sacrifice” (Excerpt 1), “red army” (Excerpt 3) and “hostage” (Excerpt 8) in the selected editorials. “The meanings of words and the wording of meanings are matters which are socially variable and socially contested, and facets of wider social and cultural processes” says Fairclough (1992a: 185).

Meanwhile, the editorials contrast education that is involved in critical and political acts with education that meets the needs of globalisation. In the editorial of Excerpt 1, it is argued that education should serve the “global trend of raising competitiveness”, whereas to counter the global trend is “anachronistic”. Egalitarian education is described as a “lazy and irresponsible” education which “destroys infinite potentials of students”. The discourse of so-called ‘global’ education more explicitly shows a kind of neutral education or neutral educator that the conservatives envisage. The editorial of Excerpt 2 was issued before the election of the member of the board of education in 1991. At that time, members of the board of education were elected by local councillors, and then, members of the board of education appointed the superintendent of education.

Excerpt 2.

The election of the member of the board of education now becomes a pressing matter... There must be some answers to the question of who is eligible for the member of the board of education. First, as the Local Education Autonomy Act states, the persons affiliated with any political parties should be

excluded, in order to secure professionalism and political neutrality of education... If councillors succumb to private desire or political pressure, so they elect a politically contaminated person as a member of the board of education, it will devastate the whole education as well as educational autonomy system. Secondly, we should bring our wisdom so as to select a person with a great deal of moral influence and a high degree of professionalism, regardless of whether or not s/he is experienced in the field of education... Especially there are a lot of professional businessmen and executives who want to serve the community and to devote themselves to public welfare, and it will be good to use their ability in the field of education. School management in the future will rely to a large extent on cooperation with parent organisations, local residents, and the government. In the same vein, the involvement of business executives in school management will also be very beneficial in making schools more active and richer.

(Donga-Ilbo, 1991)

In this editorial, both “neutrality” and “professionalism” are suggested as the key virtues of a good member of the board of education, whereas a “politically contaminated” person could do harm to education. Contamination metaphor is widely used in the selected editorials, which has a function to form a negative and hostile perspective on the relationship between education and politics. I will detail the role and function of the contamination metaphor in the discourse of educational neutrality in Section Five. Here, I would like to highlight that businessmen and executives are deemed fit for education. According to the editorial, it is not a big problem whether or not businessmen have any educational experience. Instead, it is assumed that they are independent of any political interests and perform a public function with expertise in management. Even though the editorial appears to concede the important role of the government, local residents, and parent organisations, shortly after, the editorial mentions the role of entrepreneurs in

school management. This strategic concession has an effect of making the editorial look more balanced and highlighting implicitly the following argument, i.e., the role of entrepreneurs (Dijk, 1996: 27). Professionalism, referred to as a virtue of a good member of the board of education, is nothing to do with educational abilities or mind-sets. Instead, it is more to do with an ability to manage schools as enterprises.

From the selected editorials, we can easily discover the emphases on competitiveness, school management, autonomy, academic excellence, and so on (see Excerpt 4), which means that the discourse of educational neutrality consists of both ‘the discourse of left-wing political education’ which should be eliminated and ‘the discourse of neo-liberal education’ which should be promoted. Here, I use the term neo-liberal in a Foucauldian sense. For Foucault, neo-liberalism is not simply an economic laissez-faire ideology but a form of governmentality that aims at changing the way we think and act in an economic or, more precisely, entrepreneurial way (Foucault, 2008; see also Chapter Two). The so-called 5.31 Education Reform, whose details were for the first time revealed publicly on 31st of May 1995, was a very important starting point of the neoliberal transition of South Korean Education (see Chapters Three and Five for more about 5.31 Education Reform). In the reform, we could easily find out neoliberal rhetoric such as “academic excellence”, “competition”, “autonomy”, and “evaluation”. And also, we could see the similarities between what the selected editorials say and the key principles of the reform.

Schools are allowed to seek excellence based on autonomy and competition. Equality in access to quality education is realized by taking remedial measures for the areas and the segment of the population that are at a disadvantage. The quality of education will be monitored and maintained through a systematic evaluation system.

(Presidential Commission on Education Reform, 1997: 25)

3. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING TEACHER (UNION)

Teacher neutrality is of high importance in the theoretical discussion about educational neutrality (see Chapter One). In particular, teachers' union which has critical attitudes towards the government and other social and educational issues is at the centre of controversy over educational neutrality. This is related to a strong assumption working in South Korea that teachers as public servants should be faithful to the government and respect decisions made by the government. Coupled with another assumption that trade unions always cause social and economic disruptions through political collective actions like strike, teachers' union activity is deemed as illegal, non-neutral, political, subversive, and so on. Given the South Korean war-political situation in which an act of opposing the state is suppressed in the name of protecting society, there have been great difficulties with trade union activities. Kim Dong-choon, for example, points out that as well as thought criminals or political dissidents, labourers who are likely to threaten or infringe on property rights are also treated as "potential enemies" under the war-political circumstances (2011: 354-355). In the word of the former chairman of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, trade unions in South Korea are seen as "social

evils” (Weekly Kyunghyang, 2009). This is the case particularly in the field of education. Even though the Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union (KTU) could be established and legalised in 1989 and 1999 respectively as a consequence of the democratisation of 1987, the KTU has been under constant attack by conservative forces. For example, it is not surprising to see all kinds of negative conjectures such as “factional strife”, “confusion”, and “deep division” in the editorials published before the 1999 legalisation of the KTU (Donga-Ilbo, 1998b; Munhwa-Ilbo, 1998). Also, it is understandable that punishment discourses are dominantly used in the selected editorials, along with the il/legal and left/reds frame.

The editorial in Excerpt 3 uses a large amount of space for criticising the KTU that opposed the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. Here, unreasonable over-speculative criticisms of the KTU are widespread. By contrast, it is difficult to find out any explanation of neutral functions and roles of teachers’ union.

Excerpt 3.

Ahead of the APEC Summit which will be held next month in Busan, the Busan branch of the KTU announced its teaching plan, titled The Truth of APEC. The plan, a 17 minutes-long video clip, claims that APEC is an organization solely for corporations and those who are rich, and that APEC policies have a negative impact on ordinary people... The Busan APEC Summit is a golden opportunity that Korea cannot afford to miss... APEC is, according to the Korean government, a very important forum that will promote national interests by promoting economic and trade cooperation in the region, and that will address pending issues that affect people’s lives

including responses to terrorism and improving healthcare... What good can the KTU do for children, parents, and Korean people by inciting children with distorted, leftist views of the APEC? Injecting anti-globalization views to students by teaching them globalization is aimed at making money by selling whatever can be sold is in no way conducive to the education of children who will someday compete in a globalized world as individuals and as part of a nation. Without a liberal market economy and the expansion of trade, KTU teachers would not have been able to enjoy the prosperous life they have today... José Manuel Barroso, president of European Commission, recently stated that “Europe will be reduced to nothing if it fails to meet the challenges of globalization”. He, a former communist, criticized populist opposition of the market economy and free trade, and even said, “we are going to be ruined if we teach our children to resist globalization”. The Busan Office of Education has directed each school not to damage the neutrality of education, but it is not enough. The government should clearly state its position about the KTU, which brainwashes students to become the red army of anti-globalization by anti-APEC class. The Roh Moo-hyun administration must take the lion’s share of blame for the KTU’s freer and freer pushing of its educational agenda.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2005a)

For a better understanding, let me briefly examine what the plan The Truth of APEC looks like. I downloaded the full version of the plan through the website of the KTU. The plan, presented by the Busan branch of the KTU, introduces the APEC’s positive and negative effects throughout the student material 1 and student material 2 respectively. Each student material includes the arguments of the government and the anti-APEC organisation in A4 size one page in length. At the end of the plan, there is a section with the name of Inquiry Activity, in which students are asked to think of the different perspectives on APEC. What is treated as problematic in the editorial is actually the material specially designed for the union members. In line with the union’s stance on globalisation, the material addresses the negative impact

of APEC in great detail. However, the editorial commits distortion by speaking as if the material is for students. Additionally, like the assertion that “the pro-North left insists that the Korean War was not an invasion by the North, but a ‘Unification War’” (Excerpt 1), the editorial of the Excerpt 3 sheds light on an esoteric view on globalisation (“making money by selling whatever can be sold”) with highlighting it in inverted commas. The act of sharing critical perspectives on the summit itself is accused of “incitement”, and those perspectives are reduced to “distorted leftist” views in the editorial. The argument about the distorted left view becomes more persuasive coupled with an expert’s comments (president of European Commission). Leeuwen provides us with an insight into the way in which certain arguments are justified (2008: 105-123). Distinguishing four types of legitimation in discourse (authorization, moral evaluation, rationalization, mythopoesis), Leeuwen (p.107) explains that “in the age of professionalism, expertise has acquired authority” and “the experts’ utterances themselves will carry some kind of recommendation, some kind of assertion that a particular course of action is “best” or a “good idea””. Here, in addition to what the expert says (“Europe will be reduced to nothing if it fails to meet the challenges of globalization” and “we are going to be ruined if we teach our children to resist globalization”), what is much more important is the fact that he was a “former communist”. The added fact serves to not only make what he says more trustworthy but also turn the ‘leftist’ view into “distorted” or “anachronistic” view.

Against this backdrop, punishment discourses can emerge and take effect. Yet, the editorial does not argue directly the need for punishment. Instead, the editorial cites

the instruction of the Busan Office of Education saying that anti-globalisation education is non-neutral and thus should be prohibited. Again, according to Leeuwen, “not all authority legitimization is personal” (2008: 108). “Impersonal authority” like laws, rules and regulations can function as an effective way of legitimatising some statements. Indeed, the editorials on educational neutrality depend to a large extent on the laws and regulations like Article 31 of the Constitution. In doing so, they make a ‘neutral’ impression on the readers. The editorial above ends by calling upon the government to succinctly express its position about the KTU. However, it does not simply mean that the government should clarify what they think about the issue or the KTU. Together with the sentence “it is not enough”, it implies that much stronger action should be taken. We could easily discover the statements calling for the stern measures against non-neutral education in many editorials as the following examples; “the government should make a firm decision rather than showing an indecisive attitude” (Donga-Ilbo, 2009a), “we should put an end to the vicious circle of soft-punishment and show the rigour of the rule of law” (Donga-Ilbo, 2009b). The punishment discourse reminds us that language use or discourse is not just about what people say but also about what people do. Furthermore, it can be said that the violent exclusion in war-politics is based on such discursive practices.

Teachers who are involved in union activities are labelled as leftist, political, and anachronistic. Then, what does the neutral teacher look like? One editorial, headlined *The Power of Teachers* helps us think about the answer to the question. The editorial deals with the problem of the so-called “mad cow disease” which led

not only tens of thousands of people to protest against the US beef deal but also President Lee Myung-bak at the time to make an apology twice for the hasty negotiation with the USA in 2008. The candlelight protests had continued for a couple of months despite the Ministry of Justice's "zero-tolerance policy" toward protesters (Amnesty International, 2008). KTU teachers joined the protests with chanting "mad cow" as well as their own slogans like "mad education".

Excerpt 4.

The KTU does not stop criticising the government with linking the matter of 'mad cow' to the matter of 'mad education'. 'Mad education' indicates the problem of early-morning classes and School Autonomy Policy to secure schools' right to divide underperforming and outperforming students into different classes. Why is fixing the chronic problem of egalitarian education mad? This is an incitement... There is a growing concern that a large number of teachers incite children with a belief that 'our education is mad'. To indoctrinate delicate souls is a serious crime. In order to put an end to the indoctrination, measures including surveillance should be taken. Teachers are called as a mediator between the truth and the student. To do so, teachers should remain cool-headed and neutral in any situations. Teachers have an obligation to teach students about the way of distinguishing the truth from the falsehood. The power of teachers comes from this.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2008a)

Let me start with the criticism of the slogan "mad education". During the 2008 candlelight protests, the protesters made and used numerous slogans from "Impeach Lee Myung-bak (President)" to "Send Mad Cows to the Blue House" to "Eat Mad Cow Yourself (President)" (Ohmynews, 2008). Like general political slogans, such slogans are not intended to provoke an immediate and direct act. However, the

editorial overstates the negative feature of the word “mad” with arguing that the use of such slogan is an “incitement”. This reminds us that chanting the slogan “resignation of the president” is considered as an act of subverting the regime in the Excerpt 1. The editorial goes further. That is, the incitement is equated to a “serious crime” against “delicate souls” (students). Here I should mention that ‘the discourse of immature students’ contributes to the argument for neutral education. In other words, the demand for neutral education is based on the premise that students are ‘vulnerable’ to ‘biased’ teachers and knowledge. By contrast, teachers, as a “mediator” between the truth and students, are expected to “remain cool-headed and neutral in any situations” (Excerpt 4).

This kind of argument for neutral teachers as mediators between truth and students seems to be consistent with the result of the Humanities Curriculum Project (Stenhouse, 1968; 1971). The Humanities Curriculum Project, which was begun in the late 1960s in the UK with the support of the Nuffield Foundation and the Schools Council, tackled the problems of teaching in the area of controversial issues. According to the project, considering the “inescapable authority position of the teacher”, “teachers are asked to become the chairman of a committee of enquiry or a discussion group” (Stenhouse, 1968: 31; 1971: 155). Similarly, Noddings advocates the notion of “pedagogical neutrality” (2013: 63). Defining it as a “willingness to consider all reasonable points of view without endorsing one as the absolute truth”, Noddings goes on to say that pedagogical neutrality is an “ethically and strategically effective way to introduce students to controversial issues” (ibid.). Liberal neutralists’ common assumption that “decisions must not be justified by

appeal to the superiority of certain comprehensive doctrines” (Waldren, 2011: 78) underlies the so-called “procedural neutrality” (Gardner, 1989) including the role of the teacher as a chairman or pedagogical neutrality. Yet, there is a significant difference between those positions that I referred to above and the selected editorials’ position on educational neutrality. Above all, whereas liberal neutralists basically accept a multiplicity of views, what is true or false is already fixed in the editorials. Let me take one example. There has been a long-lasting debate over educational excellence and equity. But, in the above example (Excerpt 4), the criticism of excellence education is denounced as an incitement in the sense that it is an opposition to the government adopting excellence education as one of key national education agendas. On the other hand, the government’s claim or intention is accepted as fact and good. There is no room for criticism, contestation of conflict, and debate. In such situation, education becomes more involved in “eating facts” (Shor & Freire, 1987: 48), where teachers are forced to become a “technician” who feeds students factual knowledge (Smyth, 2011: 14) as well as a “national builder” (Donga-Ilbo, 2011).

4. NON-NEUTRAL LEFT-WING SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE

What is excluded in the discourse of educational neutrality is not just critical acts and educators. Critical perspectives or knowledge are also the target of the exclusion. Below is the editorial about Korean history textbooks that are accused of being biased to the left. With the rise of the ‘new’ conservative since the

inauguration of President Lee Myung-bak in 2008, a lot of criticism has been made of history textbooks for their leftist propensity. Against this backdrop, the MoE drew up detailed guidelines for neutral textbooks in 2013, and the government decided to use the only state-published history textbooks in 2015 (see Chapter Six for controversy over history textbooks).

Excerpt 5.

A storm of controversy over a “Modern and Contemporary Korean history” textbook, published by Kumsung Publishing Co. and adopted by half of high schools, has continued... An attempt to critically evaluate history from various perspectives could be necessary, given the fact that social and political situations change according to the times. There should be a difference, however, between academic thesis and school textbooks. For young people who begin to form values and viewpoints as to their country, it is more appropriate to teach value-neutral and objective facts, rather than specific ideologies or perspectives. As well as an overemphasis on anti-communism based on the Cold War logic, treating the North and the South equivalently is inappropriate. Considering the fact that students are weak in making judgement, it should be reconsidered thoroughly to convey what North Korea claims as it is... ‘Historical self-torment’ that condemns South Korea’s developmental dictatorship instead of properly criticising North Korea’s totalitarianism that destroy North Korea’s economy is undesirable. If students learn with such textbooks, can they feel proud of South Korea?

(Donga-Ilbo, 2004)

The editorial above begins by agreeing that to critically evaluate history is necessary. But, soon after, critical perspectives on history are regarded as inappropriate for students or school textbooks (apparent concession), mainly because “students are weak in making judgement”. The discourse of ‘immature or

vulnerable students' is very common in the selected editorials. That is, neutral education is required to protect students from biased political ideologies. In addition, according to the editorial, critical perspectives on history are also detrimental to students, because they make it impossible for students to take pride in their country. As represented very well in another editorial, what the selected editorials have in common is a belief that "education is to teach students to live in the world in a right way with the hope" (Segye-Ilbo, 2006). In the light of this, critical perspectives are to frustrate the hope for the society. Together with "anti-USA, pro-North, and anti-corporate" attitudes (Donga-Ilbo, 2004), "self-tormenting perspectives" of history prohibit students from living in harmony with the "constitutional spirit" and "national identity" (Excerpt 1). Critical perspectives are finally depicted as threats to society like a "poisonous mushroom spreading over the whole nation" (Donga-Ilbo, 2008c). Look at the use of the word condemn in the last part of the editorial above. South Korea had maintained a strong military dictatorship since the military coup in 1961 until the democratization of 1987. During that period, as a way of winning the consent of the mass, the economic growth had been set as the top national goal. "The average annual growth rate of the Gross National Product (GNP) between 1962 and 1966 was 7.9%, which was among the highest in the world" (Seo Joong-seok, 2007: 167). However, the economic development has resulted in social problems such as labour exploitation and the situation in which a very small number of large companies like Samsung come to have an absolute influence in the whole economy. Jeon Tae-il is the symbol of resistance to such social inequalities. With holding the book of the Labor Standards Act and saying that "Abide by the Labour Standard Act! Never let my

death be wasted!”), he burned himself to death (p.168). In the editorial, to point out the dark sides of the developmental state is treated as an act of “condemning”. Instead of ‘neutral’ words like highlight, explain, criticise, and so on, the negative word “condemn” was selected to give the readers a negative impression of the criticism. Above all, it is interesting to see reasons why the editorial think that to criticise the developmental dictatorship is to condemn our history and society. This is due to the fact leftist history textbooks do not criticise the North Korea’s totalitarianism properly. To put it differently, we must criticize North Korean society or history in order to criticize South Korea. Criticism of North Korea is the touchstone of neutral textbooks. Despite the fact that it is reasonable that the description of North Korea in South Korean history textbooks is limited, it is argued in editorials the extent of criticism of South Korea and North Korea should be the same. Even one editorial problematises “neutral descriptions” of North Korea (Donga-Ilbo, 2008c). This insinuates that to not demonise North Korea is to praise North Korea.

A good deal of the selected editorials, meanwhile, stress “objective” and “value neutral” knowledge (Excerpt 5). A critical awareness is understood as appropriate only for academics of higher education, not for students. In Excerpt 4, teachers are expected to take a neutral role in transmitting facts to students. This appears suit the idea of ‘evidence-based’ education. By evidence-based education, I mean the internationally influential urge to make education more quantifiable, measurable, and thus accountable for its outcome like the natural sciences. Under the influence of evidence-based education, “transformative critique”, in the words of Simon

(1985), which negates the objective nature of knowledge and forces the educator to confront the relation between knowledge, power, and control”, has been replaced by “technical knowledge” focusing more on the basic literacy and numeracy skills (McLaren, 2009: 64). Specifically, in terms of evidence-based practices in education, Biesta identifies three deficits:

A knowledge deficit: Knowledge about the relationships between actions and consequences can only ever provide us with possibilities, never with certainties. An efficacy deficit: In most if not all cases of social interaction we have processes that operate as open, recursive systems, as a result of which the connection between actions and consequences can never be totally determined. An application deficit: The idea that practices can change through the application of scientific knowledge makes the work that is done to transform practices so that knowledge can begin to work invisible.

(Biesta, 2010b: 500)

More broadly, Giroux brings his attention to the link between the culture of positivism and the lack of critical historical consciousness in education (2011: 19-47). According to him, in addition to the focus on objective knowledge that is ahistorical, apolitical, and impersonal, “celebrating the present” is a characteristic of the culture of positivism (p. 29). This supports my findings above. Critical and historical approaches degenerate into the attack on students as well as the ‘glorious’ history.

5. “CONTAMINATION”, “THREAT”, AND “PROTECTION”: THE METAPHORICAL CONSTRUCTION

Various metaphors are pervasive in the discourse of educational neutrality. This is in part due to the argumentative characteristic of the genre of editorial. That is, as an effective way of persuasion, metaphor is frequently used in editorials. In addition, the ambiguity of the concept of educational neutrality has to do with the use of metaphor. The theoretical spectrum of educational neutrality varies from liberal neutralist believing the possibility of neutral education to critical educators insisting on the absolute impossibility of neutral education, as I have noted in Chapter One. In the case of South Korea, there is no consensus about what neutral education means or how it can be achieved, though several laws and regulations regarding educational neutrality exist. Consequently, if someone wants to put forward a claim for non-neutral education publicly, s/he comes to feel the need to explain it in a rather ‘familiar’ way. “The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”, say Lakoff & Johnson (1981). But, metaphor is not just a linguistic decoration, but it “structures how we perceive, how we think, and what we do” (ibid.). In what follows, I detail the way in which the contamination metaphor that is widely used in the discourse of educational neutrality structures how we think and what we do with regards to non-neutral education.

Excerpt 6.

Political neutrality of education must be preserved. The government still tries to publicise its political movements to teachers. That is such an old-fashioned stupid behaviour... For the future of our education, we need to create a politically uncontaminated area in which autonomy, professionalism, and

political neutrality of education are guaranteed. Protecting education from political contamination is the best way to effectively achieve goals and functions of education... And, 300,000 teachers and educational workers must be aware that political contamination means not only the government's interference in education but also political influence exercised by social movement forces.

(Donga-Ilbo, 1990)

Excerpt 6 is part of the editorial about the government publicising a 'merger of three parties'. On 22nd of January 1990, President Roh Tae-woo agreed with two opposition leaders to merge three parties and create a new huge conservative ruling party called the Democratic Liberal party. After that, the government tried to promote such political movement by handing the document including the legitimacy of the merger out to the teachers. The main message of the editorial is that the government is polluting education, and protecting education from such political contamination is a crucial thing to do. As the word "still" implies in the editorial, the rhetoric of contamination appears to reasonably reflect the history of South Korean education as a political tool. Yet, the fact that the contamination metaphor repeatedly appears in the selected editorials regardless of the object (such as the government) indicates the fact that the contamination metaphor serves to problematise the problem of educational neutrality in a particular way, and thus creates a new reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 2006).

First and foremost, the contamination metaphor connotes the hostile relationship between education and politics. Whereas education is depicted as "pure" and "sacred", politics is equated with a "dangerous" pollutant (Segye-Ilbo, 2009). Some

statements like “we need to create a politically uncontaminated area” or “protecting education from politics” in Excerpt 6 exemplify the irreconcilable relationship between education and politics. An attempt to separate politics from education also can be read as an attempt to pave the way for neoliberal education reform. That is, by freeing education from political pressures, unregulated neoliberal education reforms can operate more effectively. Leys (2003), for example, argues that there have been attempts to take politics out of public institutions and restructure public institutions in light of business interests. Similarly, Brown argues that,

Neoliberal reason, ubiquitous today in statecraft and the workplace, in jurisprudence, education, culture, and a vast range of quotidian activity, is converting the distinctly political character, meaning, and operation of democracy’s constituent elements into economic ones.

(Brown, 2015: 17)

These arguments are consistent with my findings that together with the war-politics discourse, the neoliberal education discourse consists of the discourse of educational neutrality. Plus, it is noteworthy that what is at issue in the editorial is not just the inappropriate intervention of the government in education. In the last sentence, the editorial ‘suddenly’ adds that political influence exercised by social movement forces is also polluting education. Given the fact that the state is no longer taken into consideration in relation to the matter of educational neutrality in the rest of the editorials, we can acknowledge that social movement forces are what the selected editorials really want to problematise through the contamination metaphor. Let’s have a look at Excerpt 7 below. The editorial deals with the

problem of teachers' 'illegal' engagement in a political party. In South Korea, teachers are not allowed to involve in a political party in any sense. But, in 2011, the prosecution indicted more than 1,350 (mostly) KTU teachers for the involvement in the political party, Democratic Labor Party, which declares the succession of socialist values and the realisation of progressive politics. The court, however, ruled that most of those prosecuted were not guilty and a few of them were fined. There was a growing concern for the 'political' indictment for destroying the KTU strongly against the government at that time.

Excerpt 7.

The KTU, which was established twenty-one years ago, has been influencing on various generations from school students to the thirties by means of 'distorted education'. The fact that some younger generations are armed with anti-state and anti-market views instead of a healthy criticism of society is not irrelevant to the influence of the KTU. Political neutrality of education must be strictly secured so as to protect students from this anachronistic ideological education. Prevent contamination of education.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2010)

Apart from the question about the relation between teachers and political party, the editorial asserts that the KTU pollutes education. The KTU is treated as an army to "arm" students with such anachronistic ideologies like anti-state and anti-market views. The degree of pollution caused by the KTU is exaggerated with an unfounded suspicion that school students, younger generations, and the thirties are affected by the KTU. Even in another editorial, critical forces and acts are described as a "malicious virus" which is highly "infectious" (Seoul, 2011). With dramatising

the seriousness of pollution, the editorials inform the readers that critical forces are not just problematic for the few but for everyone or for the future of our society. Consequently, the contamination metaphor not only brings about a sense of fear but also connotes the need for strong measures to remove pollutants particularly in the war-political situation where social ‘purity’ or ‘integrity’ is of significance (see Chapter Two for more about the relationship between war-politics (state racism) and statist universality). The use of categorical statements like “political neutrality of education must be preserved” (Excerpt 6) and “prevent contamination of education” (Excerpt 7) is to inform that the danger of “distorted education” is imminent and thus urgent intervention (of the state) is necessary. Sontag’s account of metaphors attached to AIDS helps us to understand “authoritarian politics that promotes fear and a sense of the imminence of takeover” and the concomitant “military imagery”. Excerpt 8 below is the epitome of the system of the contamination metaphor. A combination of the contamination metaphor and the military metaphor (like the argument that the government must respond legally to the politically corrupt KTU that takes students hostage and pollutes education indiscriminately) “overmobilizes”, “overdescribes”, and “stigmatises” of the situation (Sontag, 1989: 180). And, like this, metaphor centres the problem of educational neutrality around critical educators (knowledge) as “the ones who pollute the classroom with a murky political wind” (Hankook-Ilbo, 2000). As Laclau claims, metaphor functions here as hegemonic politics (2014). Drawing on Jakobson’s analysis of language and aphasic disturbances, Laclau insists that inherent in politics are discursive combination (metonymy) and substitution (metaphor). Taking the point of Laclau, I would argue that the contamination

metaphor is used not only to win the consent of the mass but also to gather conservative forces.

Excerpt 8.

Young students are taken hostage by the KTU... As a result of the problematic “Truth of APEC Class” by the Busan branch of the KTU, parents are extremely agitated and worried about the possibility that their children will be indoctrinated by ideology... The Constitution stipulating the need for educational neutrality is of no use any longer... We cannot sacrifice our education to the corrupt KTU having a vested interest in political power. We cannot leave the fate of the nation to students who are exposed indiscriminately to globally disused anachronistic ideologies and do not learn how to make a reasonable and objective judgement... The government must respond in accordance with the principle of the rule of law and consumers of education should exercise their rights to stop this situation... We should release students.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2005b)

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have analysed the data gathered from a conservative newspaper’s editorials. Deploying CDA that sees discourse as social practice, I have particularly examined what events and elements are combined in what ways in the discourse of educational neutrality. The problem of educational neutrality is raised around issues such as teachers (union), school knowledge (school textbooks), and the superintendent of education. More specifically, teachers’ and superintendents’ participation in social movements, trade union activities, historical knowledge on

the dark sides of the country are the main objects of the editorials' criticism. They were perceived as leftist, political, non-neutral, non-beneficial to raising competitiveness, and therefore non-educational. Given this, I would argue that the conservative newspaper plays a part in justifying the working of war-politics that treats critical thought and action as act of benefiting enemies (North Korea). It is also noteworthy that the discourse of educational neutrality has the performative function. As Butler explains, language or discourse functions to produce a certain subject and reality through "the setting of a boundary and the repeated inculcation of a norm" (1993: 8). For example, the 'contamination' metaphor explicitly and implicitly instills a sense of fear of non-neutral education into the public, and thus contributes to the intensification of the war-political reality where the culture of punishment is pervasive. By limiting teachers' role to neutral mediation between truth and students and interpellating students as immature and vulnerable, the editorials set a boundary of what teachers and students should do.

These findings are congruous with Counts' assertion that neutrality is perhaps theoretically possible but is practically tantamount to giving support to the forces of conservatism (1932: 54). In effect, educational neutrality is used as a conservative strategy to disable critical thinking and acting. In the next two chapters, I complement my analysis of the newspaper editorials, bearing in mind that discourse cannot produce any meaningful effects on its own. That is, I turn my attention to the neutralising processes of education in Chapters Five (the neutralisation of teachers) and Six (the neutralisation of school knowledge). In particular, I do so by investigating how repressive sovereign power mechanisms

and neo-liberal power mechanisms work together with and through the discourse of educational neutrality that I have examined in this chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE. THE NEUTRALISATION OF TEACHERS

Trade unions for teachers (hereinafter referred to as trade unions) shall not be allowed to participate in any political activities.

(Article 3 of the Act on the Establishment, Operation, etc., of
Trade Unions for Teachers)

The theory of sovereignty is, in other words, the subject-to-subject cycle, the cycle of power and powers and the cycle of legitimacy and law. So we can say that in one way or another- and depending, obviously, upon the different theoretical schemata in which it is deployed-the theory of sovereignty presupposes the subject; its goal is to establish the essential unity of power, and it is always deployed within the pre-existing element of the law.

(Foucault, 2003: 44)

1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, through a close examination of newspaper editorials on educational neutrality, I demonstrated that the discourse of educational neutrality has its own specific application in South Korea. Briefly speaking, critical engagement in socio-political issues, in particular, is depicted not as a proper educational act but as a non-neutral leftist political act. Meanwhile, the discourse of educational neutrality is buttressed by neoliberal beliefs. For example, in the selected editorials, it is commonly assumed that the most important educational task

is to refashion education in favour of a global economy where students as well as teachers continuously compete against one another. Here, to prepare students for successful ‘human capital’ rather than well-informed critical citizens in a democratic society is at the heart of education.

In this and the next chapter, I investigate the multiple forms of power being exercised through and with discourses regarding educational neutrality. A good deal of critical scholarship reveals that power and discourse are inseparable and interconnected (Dijk, 2008b; Foucault, 1970; 1978a; Laclau, 2014; Fairclough, 2010). Discourse has the potential to transmit and produce power and it is also able to work more effectively when combined with specific power strategies (Foucault, 1978a: 100-101). This is also the case for the discourse of educational neutrality. In this chapter, I illustrate what kinds of techniques of power are used to realise the discourse of educational neutrality. I particularly take two seemingly different but interrelated power mechanisms into consideration, bearing in mind that two social structural factors, war-politics and neo-liberalism. On the one hand is what might be called sovereign power. Sovereign power exerts “the right to take life and let live” (Foucault, 1978a: 138) and resorts to the repressive state apparatus in Althusser’s term (1971). Althusser contrasts the repressive state apparatus (e.g. the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, and so on) that “functions by violence” with ideological state apparatuses (e.g. the school) that “function by ideology” (1971: 252-253). Although “there is no such thing as a purely repressive apparatus”, the repressive state apparatus comes to be much more operative under the war-political circumstances (p.253). By giving innumerable cases, Kim Dong-

choon argues that war-politics, where those who criticise and resist the state are seen as enemies, relies, to a significant extent, on the “ruthless and immoral use of state power” (2013: 60). On the other hand is neo-liberal governmentality (see Chapter Two for more about Foucault’s account of neo-liberal governmentality). In an era of neo-liberalism, power is not exercised in a mere repressive way. As Foucault explains through the concept of governmentality, power tries to influence on the way we think and act by means of knowledge, discourse, institutions, and so on (Foucault, 2007; 2008). In particular, central to neo-liberalism is competition. Power is exerted in ways that encourage individual subjects to manage and develop themselves in terms of economic efficiency and productivity, thereby maintaining the competitive market and society. “Vigilant social interventions” for maintaining the competitive market and society (Dean, 2010: 71).

The discussion in this chapter is centred around the Korean Teachers and Educational Workers Union (KTU). As an organised critical force in the field of education, the KTU is at the centre of the controversy over educational neutrality. I argue that discourses surrounding the matter of educational neutrality and various power mechanisms have played a part in the marginalisation of critical teachers and their unions. In effect, the KTU and its members have been under attack in numerous ways from conservative forces arguing that the KTU turns the ‘pure’ educational arena into a political arena by resisting the government and rejecting national educational policies (Ohmynews, 2014b; 2014c). As the previous chapter demonstrated, teachers are required to be neutral, objective and professional individuals only seeking to improve students’ academic and economic competence.

Prior studies of the influence of neo-liberalism on teachers' unions have not been able to convincingly show why and how space for critical teachers' unions has been shrinking in South Korea (Compton & Weiner, 2008; 2009; Weiner, 2012; 2015). Also, despite the increasing importance of a social partnership paradigm highlighting the collaboration with trade unions, the government, and the market, the very Korean war-political circumstances should be taken into account in order to understand the crisis of trade unions in South Korea (see Stevenson, 2012 for 'new unionism'). That is, critical teachers' unions have been considered by conservative forces as the rebellious group that should be removed, not as partners of governance under the war-political circumstances.

For the analysis in this chapter, the period of 1987 to 1999 is particularly set, because the massive democratisation movements of 1987 provided the most direct impetus to the establishment and the legalisation of the KTU in 1989 and 1999 respectively. I also bear in mind the education reform that took place in the mid- and late 1990s and laid the foundation for neo-liberal education in South Korea. In the following section, I give a brief account of the rise and fall of the first democratic teacher union, the Korean Federation of Teachers Union (KFTU). The point that I want to highlight through the case of the KFTU is the different understanding of neutral education between critical teacher unions and the state. In Section Three, I pay attention to the way in which the KTU had been regulated by the repressive state power particularly in the late 1980s when the KTU was about to be founded. In Sections Four and Five, relatively less violent ways to screen out critical (pre-

service) teachers and to individualise teachers in the name of education reform are discussed.

2. CRITICAL TEACHERS, UNIONS, AND NEUTRAL EDUCATION

It was in the revolutionary political context of 1960 that the first democratic teacher union was formed in South Korea. On 19th of April 1960, millions of people took to the streets and protested against the socio-economic crisis deepened by the Korean War and long-lasting dictatorship of President Rhee Syng-man (see Kim Ho-ki, 2000; Han Sang-jin, 1990 for the April Revolution). The so-called 3.15 Rigged Election was the epitome of twelve years of dictatorship. The government forged the electoral register and replaced the ballot box to the manipulated one. Voters were threatened by political hoodlums. The April Revolution put an end to the ruling of Rhee Syng-man and set an important milestone in the history of South Korean democracy, as the Preamble of the Constitution says that “we, the people of Korea, proud of a resplendent history and traditions dating from time immemorial, upholding the cause of the Provisional Republic of Korea Government born of the March First Independence Movement of 1919 and the democratic ideals of the April Nineteenth Revolution of 1960 against injustice.”

Students, in particular, played a key role in the April Revolution, precisely because education was mobilised to regenerate the dictatorial regime. For instance, students in Daegu were forced to attend school on Sunday amid concerns over the possibility

that a number of students would participate in the hustings of the vice Presidential candidate of the opposition party on 28th of February 1960. Secondary school students in Daegu thus began to resist saying “give freedom to the school” (Society for the 2.28 Movement for Democracy, <http://www.228.or.kr>). The student movements served as a catalyst for the April Revolution. And, they also led teachers to reflect upon the situation where teachers were implicitly or explicitly asked to join the ruling party and to assist the ruling party’s election campaigns including the 3.15 Rigged Election itself, thereby contributing to the continuation of the dictatorial regime (Byun Myung-hee, 1986). Lee Mok, who was the executive secretary of the KFTU at the time, recalls that “shortly after the April Revolution, teachers were really ashamed of themselves so that they could not stand before students” (Sisapress, 1999). Similarly, in a short article published right after the April Revolution, Ko Hwang-kyung denounces “educators’ lukewarm attitude” towards the dictatorial regime and “odious educators” who made young students protest and shed blood (1960: 22). In the atmosphere of revolution and self-reflection of teachers, the first democratic teacher union, the KFTU, could be founded on 22nd of May 1960. 22% of teachers (19,883 teachers) joined the union (KTU, 2011: 66).

It is obvious that the emergence of the KFTU was against a backdrop of increasing political intervention in education. After liberation from Japanese colonial rule, education became the most effective tool to spread and strengthen the “national identity of the anti-communist democratic citizen” (Lee Seoung-won, 2008: 160). The introduction of the Student Corps for National Defense (SCND) in 1949 is the

case in point. According to the SCND system, all university and secondary school students were forced to organise the student corps and to receive military and anti-communist education (Im Chong-myong, 2012). The Korean Education Association, organised by the U.S. military government and after then backed up by the governments, could not stand for general teachers and their anxiety about the use of education for political purposes. During the period of the military dictatorship (1961-1987), the political instrumentalisation of education had much deepened. Shim Sung-bo vividly depicts school lives of teachers subjugated to the control of the government in the 1980s.

In the 1980s, primary and secondary school teachers were forced out of teaching just because they had or read books that criticise the national education system. Their drawers were secretly censored by the school authorities. When the foreign presidents visited, they had to accompany students on the roadside to welcome the foreign presidents. Raising an objection to such situation is treated as contempt of the state. The disobedience of teachers was not tolerated. Even though organising a lesson about 4.19 revolution was an attempt to teach the values of democracy, the lesson was thought as impure. When teachers criticised any government policies, they were dismissed because as teachers as civil servants should obey the order of the government and abide by the national curriculum... No matter when a few people gathered and discussed something, they were labeled as 'communists' or 'reds'. All the democratic teachers were reds.

(Shim Sung-bo, 2007: 131-133)

Considering the political instrumentalisation of education, neutral education is the legitimate concern of critical teachers and the KFTU. The platform of the KFTU, for instance, included political neutrality of education. Also, in the Declaration for

Democratisation of Education, which was made by the Korean YMCA Secondary Education Association in 1986, the firstly suggested condition for democratisation of education is a realistic protection of educational neutrality. The demands for ‘truly’ neutral education is related to the abstractness and arbitrary nature of the Constitution stipulating political neutrality of education. The clause stating the necessity for political neutrality of education was added to the Constitution in 1962. The amendment of the Constitution led by the military dictatorship, however, was not for protecting education from political influences but for banning possible critical activities including collective action of teacher unions from the field of education. This is why the declaration said that “political neutrality of education has not been guaranteed in the ragged Constitution” (Korean YMCA Secondary Education Association, 1986). However, the need for neutral education, ironically, has functioned as a ground for the repression of critical teacher unions. Since the revision of the Constitution, in particular, critical educational activities including union activities have been ‘legitimately’ regulated within the framework of ‘illegality’. In general, the idea that collective actions by critical teacher unions allow for political transformation pervaded conservative thought, and to neutralise education became a primary task of conservatives. Like ‘the rule of law’, ‘professionalism’ and ‘left-wing politics’, various discourses related to the discourse of educational neutrality served the exercise of power to achieve such task (see Chapter Four for the variety of the discourse of educational neutrality). I will detail them in the following sections.

3. THE REPRESSIVE STATE APPARATUS

Let me begin with the story of the KFTU again. A year after the establishment of the KFTU, Park Jung-hee seized power through a military coup in 1961. In accordance with the military government's effort to subdue critical forces, the MOE made a false statement that "the KFTU conspired to overturn the current government and to communise South Korea" (cited in the KTU, 2011: 63). After then, over 15,000 teachers in the union were arrested and expelled from the school, while key union officials were jailed for 5 to 10 years for threatening national security. As a result, the KFTU was totally destroyed. The process of the destruction of the KFTU encapsulates how sovereign power works. Above all, sovereign power is exercised at individual subjects. According to Foucault, "sovereignty is the theory that establishes the political relationship between subject and subject" (2003: 43). Plus, the repressive state apparatus has been on the front line to hunt for 'non-neutral' educators and eliminate them. Of course, as far as educational neutrality is concerned, the role of the state is important. Yet, state neutrality is less to do with the state's intervention in education. Rather, state neutrality is required to restrict the influence of the state, because (state-run) public education is made compulsory in most countries. By drawing on Rawls' argument for liberal neutrality, Waldren, for example, contends that state educational policy should be neutral for two reasons (2013: 75). First of all, "educational institutions are coercive". Secondly, "educational institutions have a profound effect on people's lives". Similar argument is made by Temperman. Given the compulsory characteristic of modern public education, "the state has a compelling obligation to remain neutral", claims

Temperman (2010: 866). Furthermore, in terms of state obligations, Temperman suggests that the state should not only “refrain from interferences” but also “proactively guarantee availability and access” (p.867). Yet, in South Korea, the state as a ‘guardian of neutral education’ exercises its “right of the sword” to silence critical teachers and their unions.

The right of life and death is always exercised in an unbalanced way: the balance is always tipped in favor of death. Sovereign power’s effect on life is exercised only when the sovereign can kill. The very essence of the right of life and death is actually the right to kill: it is at the moment when the sovereign can kill that he exercises his right over life. It is essentially the right of the sword.

(Foucault, 2003: 240)

The KTU, as a successor to the KFTU, had been exposed to the threat of state violence. But first, the emergence of the KTU. South Korea faced a massive social and political upheaval called the 1987 June Uprising¹¹, which put the military dictatorship to an end at least at the level of procedural democracy. The rapid

¹¹ Park Jong-chul, an activist and a student at Seoul National University, died of torture on 14th of January 1987, while being questioned by policemen about the whereabouts of some of his colleagues at the university. The authorities initially said that “policemen only hit the desk and he died of shock”, which infuriated people even more. Also, a tear gas shell fired by police struck a student’s head. The student, Lee Han-yeol, was in protest against President Chun Doo-hwan’s denial of the Constitutional revision for direct election of the president, and he eventually died on 5th of July. Since then, demands for democratisation had arisen across the country, which led the presidential candidate (Roh Tae-woo) of the ruling party to announce the so-called ‘6.29 Declaration’ including the unconditional acceptance of the direct presidential election (Park Joon-sung, 2016). Shortly after the ‘June Uprising’, a huge labour movements known as the ‘Great Workers’ Struggle’ took place between July and September, which affected, to a large degree, the unionization of workers. Whereas the number of unions was 2,742 and the number of union members was 1,050,000 (trade union density was 15.7%) by the end of June 1987, the number of unions increased to 7,883 and the number of union members reached at 1,930,000 (trade union density was 19.8%) in 1989 (Kim Geum-soo, 2007).

change of the socio-political circumstances resulted in the foundation of Teacher Association in 121 cities, counties and districts as of 1988 and finally in the establishment of the KTU on 28th of May 1989. Below is an excerpt of the Founding Manifesto of the KTU. From many documents published by the KTU, we can see that the KTU put a consistent emphasis on autonomous and neutral education as the KFTU did.

Teachers and school staffs have fallen prey to the propaganda of the ruling forces under violent compulsion from dictatorial regimes that have abused autonomy and political neutrality of education. We have not been able to meet righteous educational demands of people, and consequently, students' right to receive a true education has been denied.

(KTU, 1989)

Before and after the foundation of the KTU, there was tremendous repression by the state power, which was quite different from the inaugural speech of President Roh Tae-woo. In the speech delivered in 1988, it was said that “an era of neglecting autonomy and human rights in the name of national security and an era of suppression or torture in a secret room are over”. In less than a year after the inaugural speech, the President changed his stance and announced that the government would exert its police power rigorously over issues threatening national security and national development (Donga-Ilbo, 1989). The KTU became the main target of state power. For instance, it was revealed by the parliamentary audit that the secret inspection of teachers involved in the KTU and democratisation movements was carried out by a department called Teacher Intelligence Agency under the MoE (MBC, 1988). As well as the MoE, other state apparatuses were

mobilised systematically for the suppression of the union. The government's confidential document, entitled Measures for Destroying Teacher Unions, proves it (The National Intelligence Service Development Committee for Clarifying the Past, 2007: 365-378; Lee Yeong-jae, 2011: 122-129)¹². According to the document, the Ministry of Culture and Public Information created a video in which the teacher union was likened to a “left-wing violence revolution” and forced broadcasting companies to broadcast the video. In particular, the Ministry of Justice and the National Intelligence Service (NIS) had been conducting precise inspection of teachers and the union very frequently, and a number of teachers in the union were prosecuted for breaching the National Security Law (NSL) and other relevant laws. Soon after the establishment of the KTU, about 1,500 teachers were dismissed. In addition, the NIS was deeply implicated in the process of recruiting new teachers by means of Security Test. Pre-service teachers having an experience of student unions or groups were not able to pass the test for teacher qualification (I will detail it in the next section). The fact that the main task of the NIS is to oversee issues on national security like terrorism implies that the teacher union was considered as an internal enemy.

The use of the repressive sovereign power could gain its legitimacy with the help of some specific discourses. First and foremost, the discourse of ‘the rule of law’. Until the legalisation of the KTU, the KTU had had to fight against the stigma of illegal organisation. Even though there was no law directly circumscribing the

¹² The document was unveiled by a lawmaker during the parliamentary audit taking place in 1989.

establishment of teacher unions at that time, laws prohibiting teachers from participating in political activity were used as a ground for restricting teachers' union activity. This was coupled with the dominant view that "trade union activity is a political activity in which people wear headbands and protest" (MoE, 1989a). For example, according to Article 66 (1) of the State Public Officials Act, "no public official may participate in an organization of, or join in, any political party or other political organization." Through the Presidential Instructions which were issued three times between January and April 1989, President Roh Tae-woo identified union activity of teachers with an illegal, radical, and political attempt to conscientise (Maeil Business, 1989; KTU, 2011: 328-333). As soon as the KTU was labelled as an illegal political organisation, severe repression could ensue 'legitimately'. However, as Tamanaha pertinently says, there was a "striking disjunction between the theoretical discourse on the rule of law and the political discourse on the rule of law" (2004: 4). In general, the rule of law indicates that persons or institutions in power should "work through general legislation rather than through irregular decrees and ad hominem proclamations" (Ferejohn & Pasquino, 2003: 242). Yet, the government used "the rule of law as a political weapon" (Maravall, 2003). This was evident in the use of the presidential veto. Although an amendment bill allowing teachers to organise their union was passed by the National Assembly in February 1989, it, however, ended up in a failure on the ground of the presidential veto. The decision was also against international regulations. International organisations such as Education International (EI), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and the International Labor Organization (ILO) makes explicit that workers including teachers have "the right

to establish and to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation” (ILO, 1950: Article 2).

Since the establishment of the KTU, we have put a lot of effort into the legalisation of the KTU. All the goals of our fight, whatever they are, have converged on the issue of legalisation of the illegal KTU. The legalisation of the KTU was the most crucial political and social problem that any governments, whether good or bad, could not ignore.

(Yoon Ji-hyung, 2008: 67)

Secondly, the equation of union activity with political activity developed into the idea that union activity is a subversive activity of the left. At the meeting of the national superintendents of education on 29th of December 1988, President Roh Tae-woo, for example, made it clear that to found the teacher union (KTU) is to “challenge the regime by mobilising students” (cited in Lee Yeong-jae, 2011: 90). True Education that the KTU pursues were also regarded as an attempt to “subvert the current liberal democratic regime” and to “use sacred schools as a place for class struggle” (A School Newsletter, cited in KTU, 1990: 508-509). As a means to win the consent of the public, in Gramsci’s word, the discourse of subversive left-wing politics was more systematically produced and disseminated (see also Chapter Four). A couple of months before and after the foundation of the KTU, five pamphlets, which explain that True Education aims to “instil revolutionary class consciousness”, were made by the MoE and distributed to schools, neighbourhood meetings and parents throughout the whole nation (KTU, 1990: 505-506). The number of copies of the pamphlets was over 9.57 million (ibid.). By portraying the KTU as a dissident force causing a severe national crisis, the discourse promoted a

sense of fear, thereby justifying the harsh suppression of the KTU. The fact that the NSL, whose aim is to ban anti-state behaviours and organisations, was widely used as a legal ground for arresting and prosecuting the KTU teachers characterises the collaborative relation between the discourse on the KTU as a subversive force and the use of repressive state power. The stigma of subversive left-wing politics and its corresponding practices were more routinely carried out at the level of local schools. Private school foundations and head teachers, in particular, played a pivotal role in monitoring, reporting, and dismissing dissident teachers on a daily basis. According to the statistics released by the MoE (cited in KTU, 2011: 1,230), 661, out of 1,515 dismissed teachers due to the involvement of the KTU, were private school teachers. Article 58 of Private School Act stating that “teachers can be expelled when the teacher participates in a political movement, or refuses lectures and seminars in a group, or guides and agitates students to support or to oppose a political party” offered a ground for the dismissals. Additionally, it should be noted that private school foundations’ and head teachers’ anger at the KTU was extremely aggressive. Let’s see the following two quotes made during the time when the matter of the reinstatement of the dismissed KTU teachers was under discussion in 1992 and the time when the legalisation of the KTU was under negotiation in 1999 respectively.

The KTU leaders are the core of the anti-government political forces that have spearheaded street protests and violent demonstrations... If we accept the KTU in the name of national harmony, the educational arena will be devastated and the nation will be convulsed.

(Head Teacher Associations, 1992, cited in Lee Han-ki, 1993:
119)

We strongly require the authorities to crack down on the KTU's anti-national and anti-state crime not only to kill our students on a spiritual level but also to implement the left-wing ideology eventually. They do so by introducing direct election system of head teacher and transforming the (informal) meeting of school affairs into the (formal) resolution committee. The attempts will disrupt school management and overthrow the normal development of national education.

(Korea Association of Private School Foundations, 1999, cited
in Yoon Ji-hyung, 2008: 70)

The wrath of private school foundations and head teachers was understandable considering that the KTU opposed the political instrumentalisation of education on the one hand and sought the democratisation of corrupt private schools on the other hand. Private schools could become a hotbed of large-scale corruption under the government's support and non-intervention. The past governments gave private school foundations with economic incentives and deregulation in return for their support to meet the growing demand for education after liberation in 1945. For example, the first South Korean government announced that "if someone establishes a private school foundation and registers its own land as the property of the school, then the land will be exempt from land reform" (for more detailed discussion on the history of the rise of private school foundations in South Korea, see Han Sang-kwon, 2006). Whereas the number of private schools rocketed, private school foundations lacked the public interest in running schools. As Park Mi-ja contends, nepotism became the fundamental principle of the working of the private school, and problematic teachers and students in private schools were

always exposed to the threat of being excluded (2008: 227-229). Here, borrowing the term from Graeber, I also would like to underline the relation between a “culture of complicity” and sovereign power working in the context of war-politics (2015). That is, insofar as sovereign power cannot put everything under its control, it is keen to produce accomplices who surveil and exert right of the sword over critical teachers at the coalface. The fact that the NIS was thinking of the reform of the pro-government teacher organisations like the Korean Education Association as a long-term strategy to cope with the K(F)TU exemplifies the culture of complicity (National Intelligence Service Development Committee for Clarifying the Past, 2007: 370). In particular, the culture of complicity comes to be far more pervasive in the war-political situation in which the repressive state apparatus puts pressure on people to blow the whistle on the social enemy (Kim Dong-choon, 2013: 171). In this context, as Hartman finds out from the case of the American school during the Cold War period, to appear neutral, objective, and apolitical became the best way for critical teachers to remain employed (2008: 73).

4. THE QUALIFICATION TEST TRAP

Undoubtedly, war-politics does not depend only on the repressive state apparatus. Foucault is particularly interested in productive power rather than repressive power. However, this does not mean that there is no place for sovereign power or state power at all in modern society. To be more accurate, what is important in Foucault’s account of power is not the essence of power but how power works in a productive

way. The strength of Foucault's theory of power consists in a multiplicity of powers. In this section, I shed light on the way in which sovereign power operates without recourse to sheer violent mechanisms. Especially, I take a close look at two tests - the security test and the oral test - which started to be utilised shortly after the establishment of the KTU as a means of screening out (pre-service) critical teachers. The need for 'high-quality' teachers formed the basis of the tests at the discursive level. It should be noted, however, that it is in an 'arbitrary' way that power produces its reality and objects to be controlled. And, "arbitrary power" is also one of characteristics of the repressive state (Raskin, 1976: 199).

An instruction issued by the MoE on 16th of January 1987 was a starting point (see Lee Yeong-jae, 2011: 333). The main topic of the instruction was to apply Article 77 (3) of the Education Act strictly to the teacher recruitment process, so as to exclude those involved in "improper behaviour". But, the problem here is who and how to define the ambiguous term "improper behaviour". There were growing concerns about the possibility of the use of the term for political purposes. Indeed, instead of being tabled, the term was specified and used by the MoE in an arbitrary way. By the Ministry of Education's definition, improper behaviour means 1) sexual misbehaviour, habitual gambling, heavy drinking, violence, scaremongering, 2) participating in illegal campus unrest, 3) joining in impure organisations and illegal demonstrations 4) breaking school regulations (Lee Yeong-jae, 2011: 318). After the establishment of the KTU in 1989, the MoE added some categories such as joining or supporting the KTU and the involvement of labour disputes to its definition of improper behaviour (Jeon Mi-sook, 1991: 201).

It seems clear that these categories except the first category were levelled at critical activities which the government did not favour. By defining the ambiguous concept of improper behaviour in an arbitrary way, sovereignty could make room for exerting its power over critical teachers. This reminds us of what Agamben called “the paradox of sovereignty” (1998: 15-29). According to Agamben, sovereign power pays attention to “the creation and definition of the very space in which the juridico-political order can have validity” (p.19). Agamben goes on to say that “the law has a regulative character and is a rule not because it commands and proscribes but because it must first of all create the sphere of its own reference in real life and make that reference regular” (p.26). In this regard, critical teachers started being treated as “exception” and being “abandoned” under Article 77 (3) of the Education Act (Agamben, 1998: 28-29).

The MoE’s instruction was followed by the activation of the security test. In general, a would-be teacher who is classified as problematic in the preliminary stage of the teacher recruitment process comes to take the security test. Then, the Security Test Committee makes a request to the NIS to check the problematic applicant’s information like criminal record. This is in accordance with Article 33 of the Security Service Regulations that states the need for scrutinising public officials’ loyalty, sincerity and honesty towards the nation. Based on the information collected, the committee makes a final decision about whether or not to pass the applicant. Two months after the establishment of the KTU, the MoE officially instructed to implement the security test more thoroughly (Jin Yong-ju, 2000: 32). However, the disclosures about how the security test was run in reality were quite

astounding¹³. The fact that organisations in which the problematic applicants participated were detailed in the security test result report clearly shows that the test was not designed simply for screening out an unsuitable person, for instance, having criminal records (Parliamentary Audit Report-Incheon/Kyounggi Education Committee, 1990: 35). Also, many of those who were suspended from an appointment as a teacher in the process of the security test were either those who were not deeply involved in a protest or those who were given a special pardon because they were wrongfully penalised by the past military governments (Parliamentary Audit Report-Seoul Education Committee, 1990: 53). The State Public Officials Act enumerating grounds for disqualification of inappropriate public officials was ‘abused’ to justify the exclusion of critical pre-service teachers (Joongang-Ilbo, 1990)¹⁴. 120 and 78 pre-service teachers could not be designated as a teacher due to the security test in 1989 and 1990 respectively, according to a statement that was published by the Disqualified Pre-Service Teachers Council (1990).

¹³ It was revealed by Members of Parliament during the parliamentary audit in 1990.

¹⁴ An appointment of a person who falls under the following categories is circumscribed by the *State Public Officials Act*.

3. A person in whose case five years have not passed since his/her imprisonment without prison labor or a heavier punishment as declared by a court was completely executed or exempted;
4. A person who was sentenced by the suspension of the execution of imprisonment without prison labor or a heavier punishment and for whom two years have not passed since the period of suspension expired;
5. A person who is under a suspended sentence of imprisonment without prison labor or a heavier punishment as declared by a court;

In response to constant criticisms of the arbitrary use of the security test, the government changed its strategy to filter out critical teachers, where the need for ‘high-quality teachers’ was a discursive basis for the strategy. Let me take one example. In 1989, the government took a measure to make the teacher preparation system more complicated in the name of the improvement of teacher quality. In this context, the eligibility test examining prospective teachers’ personality and aptitude through supervisor recommendation letter and in-depth interview was introduced (MoE, 1989b: 56-57). Particularly, the term “quality control” was found in a good deal of educational documents and announcements made by the government. A research conducted by the Korea Educational Development Institute (KEDI) detailed the reasons for quality control and supported the government’s decision. While conceding that it is far from easy to define what kinds of qualities teachers should have, the research argues that the authorisation system of teacher certificates is required for enhancing “highly-qualified” teachers (Lee Yun-sik & Yu Hyun-sook, 1991: 139). In addition to developing various student achievement evaluation tools, teacher education institutes are urged to reinforce student campus life regulations, according to the study (pp.126-130). Foucault’s explanation of disciplinary power is useful in understanding effects of the introduction of the eligibility test or the quality control. For Foucault, disciplinary power is a “technique for constituting individuals as correlative elements of power and knowledge” (1977a: 194). Our bodies and activities are objectified, coded, and trained in ways that maximise our efficiency (pp.162-169). This is why Foucault calls disciplinary power a “political anatomy of detail” (p.139). After destroying

the KTU by means of judicial action and dismissal threats, power took the critical act itself as the next target. Within the framework of the quality control, would-be teachers' behaviours, whether or not they are critical, became knowable and thus controllable. There was an increasing importance of "the control of activity" to power as well as prospective teachers (p.149).

Yet, I also would like to highlight that the quality control was mainly exerted over the KTU activity. Initially, the quality control was designed as a countermeasure to disable the KTU. The activation of the security test and the introduction of the eligibility test were already manifested in a government document entitled the Comprehensive Measures Against the Teacher Union. It is thus no coincidence that the reform of the teacher preparation system took place soon after the establishment of the KTU. In the case of the in-depth interview test, what was at issue was the experience of the KTU. Below is an anecdote of Lee Yong-chul, who could not be appointed as a teacher due to a protest against the unfair interview test.

Almost all the questions that I received in the interview test were about the KTU or my view on the True Education movement. They asked me like 'what do you think of the view that teachers are workers?', 'what do you think about the argument that a law is a law?', 'Will you join the union after the appointment?'.

(Lee Yong-chul, 1989, cited in Jeon Mi-sook, 1991: 202)

Besides, the procedures for the reform were also problematic (see Ryu Myung-hye, 2000: 59). The Educational Policy Advisory Group drafted, developed, and reported proposals on the new teacher preparation system to the President.

However, instead of reporting the proposals to the President after internal meetings as usual, the advisory group submitted the proposals to the President first and then discussed them with its internal members. This is because, as the President himself recalls, the President was enthusiastic about the destruction of the “illegal leftist KTU” while in office (Roh Tae-woo, 2011). Also, the internal review process was generally open to the public, but, in this case, only the internal members were allowed to take part in the process. This disproves the argument that the reform of the teacher preparation system was the outcome of deliberations of the government to resolve the long-lasting issues like low-quality teachers and teacher surpluses¹⁵. Instead, we can see here again the workings of the arbitrary state power, together with the productive disciplinary power.

5. NEO-LIBERAL EDUCATION REFORM AND INDIVIDUALISATION

This section is concerned with the neutralisation effect of neo-liberal education reform on teachers and the KTU. Despite the fact that the KTU was legalised in the midst of South Korea’s massive neo-liberal changes including education reform, I would argue that those changes have resulted in the diminution of critical thoughts and acts like the union activity in the domain of education by facilitating individualisation of teachers.

¹⁵ Despite the decline in both the number of school students and the retirement rate of teachers since the early 1980s, the establishment of new teacher education institutes were permitted and their students enrolment quota was increased. As a consequence, a serious imbalance in the teacher supply and demand has been caused since the late 1980s (Kang Jae-tae, 1990: 12; Kim Yong-ill, 1998: 44-49).

Kim Young-sam won the presidential election in December 1992 and became the first civilian leader. Under Kim Young-sam's presidency (1993-1997), globalisation (seggyehwa, 세계화) was the first priority. It was repeated numerous times formally and informally that South Korea must prepare itself for borderless economy and fierce international competition (Globalisation Committee, 1995; MBC, 1994; Korea Overseas Information Service, 1995). As part of the "government-led globalisation" project, the Globalisation Committee was established in January 1995 and South Korea joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1996 (Jang Hoon, 2010: 26-28). It is indeed true that "from early 1995 to late 1996, a globalization fever swept the country" (Korea Herald, 2010). Of course, there can exist different interpretations of the loosely-used term globalisation, because globalisation entails an economic, political, cultural, geographical "hybridisation" process (Pieterse, 1994). In the case of South Korea, for instance, the demand for being global is paralleled by the demand for a good understanding of national identity, that is, "Koreanization" (Sung Youl-kwan et al., 2013). Despite the heterogeneity of globalisation, many scholars agree that South Korea's globalisation took the form of neoliberalism whose general aim is to apply free and competitive market principles to every sphere including education (Choi Byung-doo, 2012; Hundt, 2015; Ji Joo-hyung, 2011; Pirie, 2006, also see Harvey, 2007; Saad-Filho & Johnston, 2005, for a comprehensive overview of neoliberalism). In particular, "financialisation" is of crucial importance to the neoliberal transition (Cho Young-cheol, 2007; Jang Hajoong et al., 2001; Ji Joo-hyung, 2011). For example, the accession to the OECD

was not only a symbolic event showing that South Korea joined the ranks of advanced countries but also a substantial event driving “financial globalisation” in the sense that South Korea had to fulfil conditions for OECD membership such as reducing state regulations and capital market/trade liberalisation (Ji Joo-hyoung, 2011: 138-149). More fundamentally, under the New Five-Year Economic Plan, which was implemented between 1993 and 1997, the government took various measures to deregulate or, in Pirie’s word, “re-regulate” financial markets so as to stimulate (foreign/domestic) investment (2006: 58). Interest rates were gradually liberalised, securities companies were allowed to handle foreign exchange business, and foreign investors were allowed to invest directly in Korean stock markets with ownership ceilings, for example (see Jang Ha-joon et al., 2001: 141-145, for more financial liberalisation measures in Korea during the 1990s). However, “imprudent financial liberalization” undermined the stability of Korean economy and caused serious economic problems such as high debt levels of the chaebol¹⁶, which finally led to the economic collapse (Ji Joo-hyoung, 2014: 62). The so-called 1997 economic crisis and the accompanying International Monetary Fund (IMF)’s bailout programme contributed to the consolidation of the South Korea’s neoliberal transition (Ji Joo-hyoung, 2011: 170-311).

A new educational system was designed against a backdrop of national interest in globalisation or neoliberalism. In a meeting with members of the Globalisation Committee on 25th of January 1995, the President presented six major globalisation

¹⁶ 재벌, Korean large family-owned business conglomerates such as Samsung, Hyundai, and LG

tasks, among which education reform was chosen as the most urgent matter (MBC, 1995). Four months after the meeting, the most influential reform proposal in Korean history was publicised on 31st of May 1995, which was followed by three minor revisions. The existing literature on the so-called 5.31 Education Reform is extensive and focuses particularly on the economisation of education (Kim Gwang-Jo, 2002; Kim So-young, 2011; Kim Yong-ill, 2001; 2006; Son Jong-hyun, 1997). Without doubt, the 5.31 Education Reform was designed, from an economic perspective, to “produce human resources” for “a world without economic borders” (Presidential Commission on Education Reform [PCER], 1997: 12-13). The reform, however, goes beyond the matter of the introduction of economic/private elements into educational/public realms. By drawing on Foucault (2007; 2008), I attempt to see neo-liberalism and the 5.31 education reform in this case as an art of government which influences how we think, what we value, and consequently how we act. Let me take this a bit further (see Chapter Two for more detailed discussion on Foucault’s explanation of neo-liberalism).

While seeing neo-liberalism as “a principle of decipherment of social relationships and individual behavior”, Foucault (2008: 243) lays special stress on both the competitive economy and the enterprise society in relation to neo-liberalism. Briefly speaking, whereas “exchange” on the basis of “equality” is a key principle in classical liberalism, “competition” on the basis of “inequality” is a crucial one in neo-liberalism (pp.118-119). In neo-liberalism, the thing is boundless competition between individuals having ‘different’ capacities for “unlimited economic development” (p.61). Specifically, it is in the context of post-war Germany that

competition was taken as “a new basis of civil adhesion and prospective sovereignty, out of national political annihilation” (Gordon, 1991: 42). Given the neo-liberal emphasis on “full and complete competition”, it is not surprising that there has been a significant rise in the extent to which the state intervenes in conditions under which competition can function properly (Foucault, 2010: 119). No-control policy of laissez-faire is replaced by “permanent vigilance, activity, and intervention” of neoliberalism (p.132). However, it does not necessarily mean the return of repressive sovereign power. Rather, it is more to do with neo-liberal techniques re-modelling the existing subject into “homo economicus” who acts in accordance with the belief that infinite competition between autonomous individuals results in the maximisation of the interest of individuals as well as the whole society (p.147). Here, the enterprise model is espoused as the best way to raise the competitiveness in the market economy. In neoliberal times, individuals, as an enterprise of oneself, are mandated to invest all the efforts into forming and improving “human capital in the course of individuals’ lives” (ibid.: 229).

More schematically, Bröckling identifies four characteristics of the entrepreneur: 1) taking advantage of chances for profit, 2) being innovative, 3) being a specialist in risk-taking, and 4) optimising utility by modifying allocation (2016: 66-80). Self-help or self-improvement culture, for example, is the product of the enterprise society. Individuals are required to manage and change oneself constantly so as to survive amidst endless competition (Mcgee, 2005), where “the will to freedom” is in fact “the will to freedom to improve oneself” (Seo Dong-jin, 2009). Yet, individuals, at the same time, come to bear ultimate responsibility, simply because

they make a ‘choice’ of their own volition. This is the reason why Lazzarato asserts that “the entrepreneur of oneself is both manager and slave of him/herself” (2009: 126). To recap, neo-liberalism is a “form of government through rather than of the economy” (Dean, 2010: 134, original emphasis). The economy becomes not only “the primary object of state concern and policy” but also “specific principles, metrics, and modes of conduct”, as Brown summarises (2015: 62). Especially, individual competitiveness is posited as the most important criterion for education, where neoliberal entrepreneurial initiatives helping individuals to calculate, to manage, and to take responsibility for their lives in an individual way are widely taken as a remedy for nearly everything.

The 5.31 Education Reform quintessentially embodied the neoliberal rationalities and technologies. Above all, it is important to emphasise that an imperative part of the reform is to re-formulate a new educated subject being surrounded by the logic for competition. According to the reform proposal (PCER, 1997: 17), the reform is needed to “produce persons who possess high levels of creativity and moral sensitivity, which are required to sharpen the nation’s competitive edge in the coming era”. More specifically, it postulates the new educated subject as the “cooperative”, “creative”, “open-minded”, and “work-oriented” subject (p.21). In spite of the different foci of the four characteristics of the new educated subject, what they have in common is the idea that education is to produce an “independent and productive person” (ibid.). To put it differently, both teachers and students are expected to be “perpetually responsive to modifications in their environment” (Gordon, 1991: 43). Gordon calls this kind of neo-liberal subject as “manipulable

man” (ibid.). Upon the assumption that competition is inescapable, individuals are urged to keep learning and developing human capital or human resources of themselves so as to be more economically productive than before. In this vein, the 5.31 Education Reform’s vision to make Edutopia, which means “a society of open and lifelong education” (PCER, 1997: 20), also can be construed as a neoliberal project for not only perpetually “encouraging individuals to capitalize themselves” (Rose, 1999: 162) but also shifting the responsibility for social problems onto individuals, i.e., the “educationalization of social problems” (Szkudlarek, 2013: 1-2). Meanwhile, the reform introduced various entrepreneurial treatments into education. A Comprehensive Personal Record system, for instance, was made to create a database of students’ personal and school life so that schools could “develop students’ creativity and moral sensitivity” in a manageable way (PCER, 1997: 36). However, as an important criterion for college entrance, the personal record system compels students to voluntarily manage their behaviours and to forge a ‘unique’ career beneficial to living in the competitive neoliberal world (Ohmynews, 2018; Kim Kyung-bum, 2016).

In addition to another fierce competition for having a good record, students more importantly come to take for granted the neoliberal equation of life with competition. The reform (PCER, 1997: 53) also encourages teachers to be “competent” and “self-directed” by means of monitoring, evaluation, and reward mechanisms, like teachers in many parts of the world commonly face (Compton & Weiner, 2008; Down & Smyth, 2012; Groenke & Hatch, 2009). Here, the discourse of professionalism particularly comes into play, which also props up the discourse

of educational neutrality (see Chapter Four). The discourse of professionalism consists of “discourses of derision and recognition” (Lambert, 2004: 140-141). On the one hand, the reform proposal blames the lack of teacher professionalism or under-qualified teachers and stresses the difficulty to recruit competent teachers (PCER, 1997: 48). On the other hand, however, it is said that teaching is “the sacred mission” (ibid.) and “a teacher’s right to educate is respected and his or her professional freedom is guaranteed” (PCER, 1997: 53). Yet, the recognition is only available when “fair personnel management based on ability” is carried out (p. 48). And, as expected, fair personnel management consists of “measures, indicators, data, targets, and quantitative evaluations of outputs” (Thompson & Mockler, 2016: 2). In relation to this, Ball is absolutely right to say that “professionalism becomes defined in terms of skills and competences” and teachers as professionals are increasingly required to have “the potential for being measured, and rewarded, rather than a form of reflection, a relationship between principles and judgment” (2016: 1050). Not surprisingly, neoliberal performance management technologies are in fact a major obstacle to pursuing teachers’ professionalism, because they subject teachers to the “micro-management of ever-tightening regulations and controls” (Hargreaves, 2000: 168-169). In a survey of 1,100 Korean teachers (CGRI, 2013), 29.3% of teachers’ tasks are considered as unnecessary and menial works like compiling of student information into database and monitoring the CCTV. Similarly, in an interview with the Guardian (14.04.2014), the Association of Teachers and Lecturers Union’s general secretary in the UK argues:

Education professionals are put under constant intense pressure to meet targets, with excessive observation, changes in the curriculum and Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspections. There are demands for data, demands for lesson planning – it's as though nothing is done unless it's written down.

(Guardian, 2014)

Individualisation is what underlies the variety of the above mentioned neoliberal governmental technologies. That is, the competitive enterprise society only can work, in so far as neoliberal technologies successfully shape individuals' conduct in ways congruent with competition. In order to govern the whole, neoliberal power governs the individual. Individual teachers, students, and schools can and must be managed and rewarded differentially through the use of measurable technologies (Ball, 2016: 1055). Education, which is inherently "relational", is reduced to "individual learning" (see Biesta, 2010a: 15-19, for more detailed account of the problem of the "learnification of education"). In addition, I want to draw attention to the fact that "the modulation of differences" is much more important than "a divide" in terms of neoliberal individualisation (Lazzarato, 2009: 119). The argument that neoliberalism works on the basis of inequality not on equality is related to the differentiation strategy. The reform plans to diversify schools (the introduction of self-financed private high schools) and types of the teacher (the introduction of special research teacher) can be taken as an example. By accelerating individualisation, the differentiation strategy has a more important effect, resulting in weakening a sense of belonging and solidarity. Collectivism is the enemy of neoliberalism. Individualisation and differentiation also shrink space for critical education because the focus on individual differences is only to do with

how to develop different abilities that others do not have. To put it another way, neoliberal governmentality has neutralised the threat of critical and collective thoughts and acts such as union activity. Union activities and activists are viewed as useless for individual teachers as well as the whole society, because they seem to cause ‘troubles’ which are not beneficial to the improvement of individual competence. In a perpetual state of fear of falling behind competitors, individual teachers instead have indulged in managing their own teaching career and developing skills that clearly show their competitiveness (Chung Ba-ul, 2012; Um Ki-ho, 2013). This is the reason why teachers who are not interested in self-development but in opposing socio-structural educational problems are labelled as “lazy” and “irresponsible” (Donga-Ilbo, 2008b).

I think school is becoming more like a television audition programme. With the introduction of new types of teachers such as visiting teachers, assistant teachers, and head-teachers chosen by open competition, I am put under pressure to prove my abilities that other teachers do not have.

(A teacher, cited in Chung Ba-ul, 2012: 559)

6. CONCLUSION

In spite of the attack on critical teachers and their unions, the Tripartite Commission of Labor, Management and Government (TCLMG) decided to legalise the KTU in 1998, and correspondingly, the Law on the Establishment and Operation of Trade Unions for Teachers passed the National Assembly in 1999. With 62,654 members,

the KTU was officially legalised on 1st of July 1999. There exist several possible explanations for the legalisation of the KTU. Basically, any governments could no longer neglect the increasing influence of labour politics since the so-called Great Workers Struggle in 1987. In particular, the 1997 economic crisis made it impossible for the governments to take a strong stand against labour unions including the KTU. To some degree, cooperation between the government and the labour society was required in order to overcome the crisis. It was in this context that the TCLMG could be organised. Of course, the fact that Kim Dae-jung, who was a symbol of the democratisation movement in the 1970s and 1980s, won the presidential election played a part in the legalisation of the KTU. In addition, the repetitive recommendations of international organisations like ILO to allow the teacher union also could not be ignored any longer, particularly given that South Korea declared the globalisation vision publicly.

However, power has still produced its effect on the union through the deployment of various technologies. Whereas direct intervention in the ‘non-neutral leftist political’ union was a key strategy in the late 1980s, more regulatory or managerial practices have been introduced in the guise of professionalism and competence since the mid-1990s. As I have argued in the last section, in the light of the logic of competition, power individualises teachers, thereby disabling the union. A steady decline in union density from 26.4% in 1999 to 14.5% in 2014 is symptomatic of individualisation (Ministry of Employment and Labor [MoEL], 2015). However, it is not true that different forms of power work separately. It is always possible for (neo-) liberal forms of power to rest on illiberal forms of power, and vice versa

(Dean, 2002; 2010; Valverde, 1996). For instance, repressive state apparatus re-emerged to incapacitate the KTU under the conservative governments (between 2008 and 2016). The KTU teachers who have been deemed unprofessional, incompetent, and subversive faced the ruthless use of sovereign power. The MoEL's unilateral decision to deprive the legal status of the KTU in 2013 was another pivotal moment in the history of the KTU. The rationale for the decision is the KTU's noncompliance with the government's order that the KTU should not accept dismissed teachers as a union member (see Chun Bo-sun, 2013, for more detailed analysis of the process of the illegalisation of the KTU). However, what should be highlighted here is not the difference between the Law on the Establishment and Operation of Trade Unions for Teachers and the KTU's internal rules but the fact that the conservative governments systematically waged "war on the KTU" (Newstapa, 2017). "The Blue House, the NIS, the Prosecution, the MoEL, the far-right media, pro-government groups, and so on were mobilised to kill the KTU" (ibid.). For example, according to the NIS internal report which was made in 2011 and was exposed by the Hankyoreh (2015b), Won Sei-hoon, director of the NIS from 2009 to 2013, directed agency officials to "work closely with the conservative Superintendents of Education to punish teachers who were prosecuted for being involved in a socialist political party". He added that "we need to debilitate the union by depriving its legal status".

In the following chapter, I turn to the matter of school textbooks. Along with the emergence of the 'new' right, the problem of neutral history textbooks has been raised repeatedly since the early 2000s. Then, the demand for neutral history

textbooks resulted in the introduction of state-authored history textbooks in 2015. The subsequent analysis considers not only implications of the fact that knowledge and history became an object to be neutralised but also various discursive and power strategies that were brought to the realisation of neutral history textbooks.

CHAPTER SIX. THE NEUTRALISATION OF SCHOOL KNOWLEDGE

The “new” racism is the hatred of the other that comes forth when the political procedures of social polemics collapse.

(Rancière, 1992: 63)

Political forces seek to utilize and instrumentalize forms of authority other than those of ‘the State’ in order to govern - spatially and constitutionally – ‘at a distance’. They act to accord authority to expert authorities whilst simultaneously seeking to secure that autonomy through various forms of licensure, through professionalization and through bureaucratization. From this time forth, the domain of liberal politics will be distinguished from other spheres of authoritative rule, yet inextricably bound to the authority of expertise.

(Rose, 1993: 292)

1. INTRODUCTION

School knowledge and its socio-political nature has received a great deal of scholarly attention. A number of scholars are particularly interested in how ‘official knowledge’, which is organised in in/formal curricula, contributes to the production, reproduction and transformation of existing socio-political relations and cultural identities (Apple, 1993; 1995; Bernstein, 2000; Young, 1971; Whitty, 2010). As well as curricula, school textbooks are also crucial to school knowledge due to the fact that they are direct tools for delivering school knowledge. Of course,

Texts are not simply “delivery systems” of “facts”. They are at once the results of political, economic and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by real people with real interests. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources, and power. And what texts mean and how they are used are fought over by communities with distinctly different commitments and by teachers and students as well.

(Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991: 1-2)

In addition, many critical educational studies demonstrate the ways in which certain knowledges are prioritised or marginalised (Kincheloe, 2008; Oelkers & Klee, 2007; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Taxel, 1991). For instance, Kincheloe is concerned with Western ways of producing knowledge and presents the basic features of a contemporary mechanistic epistemology that is used in Western cultures. “FIDUROD” is the Western epistemology that stands for knowledge that is Formal, Intractable, Decontextualized, Universalistic, Reductionistic, One-dimensional epistemology (Kincheloe, 2008: 22-23).

The socio-political organisation of school knowledge indicates the impossibility of purely neutral knowledge independent of the world we live in. However, since the early 2000s, there have been increased demands for neutral school knowledge in South Korea. In particular, conservative forces have taken an extraordinary effort to alter ‘non-neutral’ leftist history textbooks. They argue that existing history textbooks reflect to a large extent the left-wing perspectives such as a pro-North Korea and anti-corporation view, while insisting on neutral and objective history textbooks. Neutrality and objectivity are the most frequently used words, albeit

highly controversially, in disputes over history textbooks. In the previous critical literature, the conservatives' attack on history textbooks is understood as an attempt not only to conceal negative historical events that conservative forces were implicated in but also to glorify the past achievements of conservative forces, so as to gain more historical legitimacy than before (Kim Han-jong, 2011; 2014; 2015; Kim Seung-eun, 2013; Lee Sin-chul, 2007; Shin Ju-back, 2006).

This chapter traces the history of controversy over history textbooks. However, my intention here is not to provide another 'correct' interpretation of certain historical events. I am in agreement that history is open to multiple interpretations. This chapter instead focus on the fact that history, knowledge, and education has begun to function within war-politics since the early 2000s. Why and how do conservative forces use and neutralise educational (historical) knowledge? Throughout the chapter, I argue that there has been a shift in the aim or operation of war-politics from the elimination of the critical subject to the production of the uncritical subject. The birth of the 'New' right and positivism is a starting point (Section Two). Then I move onto liberal and illiberal power technologies that are deployed to neutralise history textbooks. In Section Three, I particularly highlight that "political forces seek to utilize and instrumentalize forms of authority other than those of 'the State' in order to govern" (Rose, 1993: 292). This does not necessarily mean that repressive sovereign power stops working. The introduction of a single state-published history textbook is the case in point (Section Four).

2. THE BIRTH OF THE NEW RIGHT

Anti-communism and economic development are two pillars propping up the dominance of conservative ruling forces in South Korea (Cho Hee-yeon, 1998, Kim Dong-choon, 2015, Lee Byung-cheon, 2003). The “division system”, which was made and intensified by the Cold War system and the Korean War, has been a fertile ground for the conservative forces’ dominance (Paik Nak-chung, 2013). A military confrontation with a communist country (North Korea) makes it possible for conservative forces to justify their oppressive ruling. As a developing country that pursues capitalism (South Korea), economic development is used by conservative forces as a way to win the consent of the public. However, conservative forces’ political hegemony has been jeopardised since the democratisation of 1987. Conservative forces could no longer have recourse to oppressive ruling based on anti-communism. The 1997 IMF economic crisis revealed the illusion of conservative forces’ economic ruling as well. The appearance of the liberal Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun governments in the period between 1998 and 2008 signifies the fall of ‘old’ conservative forces. After the two consecutive defeats in the presidential election, it was inevitable for conservative forces to seek some changes, which ignited the ‘new’ right movements. For example, the Liberal Association and the New Right National Federation were organised in 2004 and 2005 respectively. According to Shin Ji-ho, former leader of the Liberal Association, the new right seeks liberal democracy, market-driven economic development, small government, and democratisation of North Korea, whereas the old right relies on nationalism, authoritarianism, big government, state-driven

economic development, and anti-communism (Shin Ji-ho, 20006: 170, cited in Jeon Jae-ho, 2014: 168). In the same vein, Cho Hee-yeon explains that the new and old right share the focus on economic development (2008). However, whereas the old right is interested in the maintenance of the social order through various statist interventions, the new right pursues the logic of free market economy (ibid.). Conservative news media spotlighted the birth of the new right with producing a great deal of special reports on the new right. For example, the Donga-Ilbo published more than 20 special reports on the new right since 2004. The Monthly Chosun had issued a series of interviews with the new right leaders for over a year. The election of President Lee Myung-bak, who was the former CEO of Hyundai Engineering and Construction, is indicative of the emergence of the new right. In his inaugural speech, President Lee Myung-bak declared “small government and big market” (Lee Myung-bak, 2008). However, it should be stressed that the emphasis of the new right on ‘non-intervention’ or ‘small government’ is applied only to the process of economy (see Federation of the Korean Industries, 2009 for the Lee Myung-bak administration’s de-regulation policies). That is, despite the shift from the old right to the new right, vigilant social interventions have not disappeared. As ordo-liberalism shows representatively, they have been made above all to make free market competition function properly (see Chapter Two for Foucault’s explanation of ordo-liberalism). In particular, I want to highlight that they have been made still to restrict critical thinking and action under the war-

political circumstances, albeit in a different way¹⁷. In what follows, I illustrate that the new right turns its attention much more to the production of the uncritical subject than to the punishment of critical thought and action, where the neutralisation of historical and political knowledge becomes crucial and the discourse of educational neutrality makes room for the interventions.

The problem of school textbooks had been raised by conservative forces intermittently in the 1990s in South Korea. Controversy surrounding the Standard for the Contents of History Education can be taken as an example. Unlike other school textbooks, history textbooks should comply with the standards developed by specialised institutions such as the National Institute of Korean History. In accordance with the Sixth National Curriculum Reform, the National Institute of Korean History announced the new standards for the contents of history textbooks in 1994, which included some changes in the terms such as ‘4.19 revolution’ (originally ‘4.19 movement’) and ‘5.16 military coup’ (originally ‘5.16 military revolution’). Also, according to the new standards, the extent to which independence movements and democratisation protests are explained in history textbooks increased. As these changes drew huge criticism from the conservatives, the National Institute of Korean History withdrew their initial plan eventually. However, a full-fledged “historical war against the left” has begun since the Alternative Textbook: Korean Modern and Contemporary History (hereafter

¹⁷ Shin Jin-wook makes a similar argument that the new right does not abolish the old right’s values and political strategies such as anti-communism (2008). For example, national security remains one of the top priority matters in the new right’s agenda.

referred to as Alternative Textbook) was published¹⁸. Just a month after President Lee Myung-bak took power, Alternative Textbook was published by a conservative group, the Textbook Forum. The Textbook Forum was organised in January 2005, where intellectuals and politicians, who publicly insisted the need for the organisation of the new right, joined the organisation. Criticism, made by the opposition conservative party in the parliamentary audit in 2004, about the bias of the currently used history textbooks (particularly one textbook published by Geumsung Publisher, hereafter referred to as Geumsung Textbook) was the key motivation of the establishment of the Textbook Forum. In the parliamentary audit in 2004, Geumsung Textbook was accused of holding pro-North Korea position as well as focusing too much on side effects of economic development rather than on positive aspects (Donga-Ilbo, 2004). In a similar fashion, the chairman of the Textbook Forum says that the current history textbooks including Geumsung textbook tend to describe our history, to a significant extent, in a negative and critical way, whilst the history of North Korea is depicted neutrally or even favourably in the history textbooks. The first sentence of the Declaration for the Establishment of the Textbook Forum, “Is South Korea the wrong country?”, explicitly shows that the ‘self-deprecating view of history’ is the main target of the Textbook Forum (Ha Jong-moon, 2007: 184-187). By explaining Alternative Textbook, the Textbook Forum insists that harsh self-deprecating view of history relates to “politicised history” or “historicised politics”, which is “only stressing the

¹⁸ Kim Moo-sung, a prominent politician of South Korea’s conservative party, launched the “Modern and Contemporary History Class” centering around the same party members in 2013, with saying “We should do our best to win the history war against the left by looking for ways to correct history” (Newsis, 2013).

history of democratisation movements” (Textbook Forum, 2008: 73). President Lee Myung-bak also spoke about the issue of history textbooks that “any expression that is not neutral should be modified” (Newdaily, 2009). What is at issue here is that the conservatives’ effort to modify school knowledge is mediated through and with the discourse of educational neutrality. As I demonstrated in Chapter Four, by depicting ‘non-neutral’ education or knowledge as a ‘pollutant’, the discourse of educational neutrality requires and justifies ‘urgent’ interventions.

Then, what kinds of history textbooks do the Textbook Forum and the new right want? Here, I will do not spend much space on reviewing the contents of Alternative Textbook one by one. Instead, I would like to highlight that scholars who participated in the publication of Alternative Textbook take a positivist approach to history and textbooks. At the symposium held by the Textbook Forum, Lee Joo-young, for example, argues that historians should concentrate on describing what actually happened and should not be involved directly in social problems or government policies (2005). The Textbook Forum more explicitly claims that Alternative Textbook was written on the basis of “thorough positivism” (2008: 60). And, what the Textbook Forum wants to stress by positivism is the importance of ‘factual’ and ‘objective’ statements. Of course, positivism per se is not something wrong. But, the thing is the removal of controversy, struggles, conflicts, and so forth in the name of factual and objective history. To be more specific, the new right and the Textbook Forum insist that history textbooks should include historical facts that make students feel proud of their country (Chosun, 2005). Instead, historical conflicts and struggles should be excluded from history textbooks, because they are

likely to be used for political purposes or they devalue what we have achieved. From a critical point of view, Giroux offers more general explanation of positivism and school knowledge. According to Giroux, in the culture of positivism, what can count as legitimate knowledge is objective knowledge, because objective knowledge is viewed independent of politics and history (2011, 19-47). “Knowledge is divorced from the political and cultural traditions that give it meaning” (p.36). In terms of history, “there is no room in consensus history for intellectual, moral, and political conflict” (p.37).

Let me be more specific about the effects of the attack of the new right on historical knowledge. First of all, I want to point out that conservative forces needed to make a breakthrough to overcome their hegemonic crisis. Park Hyo-jong, a representative intellectual of the new right and the co-president of the Textbook Forum, confessed that “the conservative forces have not had capacities not only to read the spirit of the times but also to create the spirit of the times, while degenerating into helpless reactionary conservatives” (Park Hyo-jong, 2007, cited in Yun Min-jae, 2008: 60). In order to overcome the crisis of the old right, the new right published popular history books including *Re-understanding Contemporary Korean History After Liberation* in 2006 and *Alternative Textbook* in 2008, opened the Mokmin Politics School in 2006 where conservative political tenets and skills are taught (Monthly Chosun, 2006), and established the Association for Korean Contemporary Historical Studies in 2011. In a sense, conservative forces started to be aware that “every relationship of hegemony is necessarily an education relationship” (Gramsci, 1971: 350). Hence, the problem of school textbooks should never be

reduced to a matter of education or school knowledge. Instead, it should be considered in relation to its political effects.

When it comes to political effects, it is fair to say that the new right's attempt to rewrite history is to establish their legitimacy for more effective governing. As Foucault says, by bringing great ancestors back to life or casting light on the great events of the past, history can serve to produce a justification of power and a reinforcement of that power (2003: 66). Indeed, the new right and the Textbook Forum try to re-discover and re-focus on conservative forces' 'glorious' history, and, as the Minister of Education says, regard them "authentic history", (cited in Kim Seung-eun, 2013: 34; emphasis mine). The emergence of the new right and a positivist view on history, however, has more profound implications for war-politics. Here, it is worth reminding the fact that Foucault link the demise or transformation of historico-political discourse with the emergence of state racism (2003; also see Chapter Two). For Foucault, state racism (or war-politics) is the situation in which historical struggles and conflicts are removed or replaced by (historical, biological, and statist) universality. Under the circumstances, all the social, historical, political, and cultural 'messy' struggles and conflicts should be removed. At the same time, in the name of protecting society, internal war is waged against such messy things. In this sense, I would argue that the conservatives' attack on historical knowledge and, more precisely, struggles is understood as a new way to perform war-politics. The discourse of neutral school knowledge makes critical knowledge problematic and thus governable. In addition, the new right's emphasis on positivism has a more substantial impact on the way in which we think and act.

That is, it makes it impossible for education to perform its subjectification function, thereby preventing the emergence of the critical subject. By subjectification function of education, following Biesta's definition, I mean that education is "not about the insertion of newcomers into existing orders but about ways of being that hint at independence from such orders" (Biesta, 2010a: 21; see also Rancière, 1992: 62 for subjectification as the denial of an identity given by an other). To put it differently, education serves the birth of the critical subject that challenges and transforms existing social orders. And, in order for education to perform its subjectification function particularly in a pluralistic democratic society, it is important to learn about historical struggles and practice how to "articulate", in the word of Laclau & Mouffe, different and conflicting ideas and interests in democratic ways (1985; see also Ruitenberg, 2010). In a similar fashion, according to the report published by the Advisory Group on Citizenship in 1998 in the U.K., it is important to examine controversial issues including moral and political issues in schools due to the fact that not only are controversial topics major issues of the day which could affect pupils, but also students have opportunities to take a part in influencing the outcome in a democratic society in some way (1998: 57). And the report goes on to clarify that "educators must never set out to indoctrinate but to be completely unbiased is simply not possible" (p.56). Yet, by reducing education to the transference of 'factual', 'objective', 'consensual', and thus 'neutral' knowledge from 'neutral' teachers to 'immature' students, the new right intends to produce and normalize the uncritical subject (see Chapters Four and Five for neutral teachers and immature students).

The revision of school textbooks does not mean a shift from a leftist textbook to a rightist textbook but mean normalising the biased textbooks.

(President Lee Myung-bak, cited in Newdaily, 2009)

3. TEXTBOOK CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

In this and the next chapter, I pay attention to the process of the ‘official’ introduction of ‘neutral’ history textbooks with reference to il/liberal techniques of power. In order to neutralize school knowledge, the new right depends on professionals and seemingly ‘neutral’ administrative procedures. In particular, as I illuminated in the previous section, professors who take a positivist view play a significant role in disseminating the new right’s perspectives. In this section, I rather focus on the role of ‘neutral’ administrative procedures in the introduction of the new right’s history textbooks.

The issues of history textbooks, raised by the new right after 2008, have continued and developed into the situation in which the Korean History Textbook, published by Gyohaksa (hereafter referred to as Gyohaksa Textbook), finally passed the certification process on 30th of August 2013. The authors of Gyohaksa Textbook consist of the new right intellectuals. As the new right government appeared in 2008 with the new right history book entitled Alternative Textbook, another conservative government succeeded in taking power again in 2013 with authorising the new right-made history textbook (Gyohaksa Textbook) as one of the official history

textbooks. I think there is no need to explain what Gyohaksa Textbook is about because the contents of Gyohaksa Textbook are exactly same as Alternative Textbook. Instead, I focus on how textbook certification processes were mobilised to introduce Gyohaksa Textbook in a seemingly ‘neutral’ but ‘arbitrary’ way.

Let me explain first the general textbook publication procedure. According to Regulations on the Curriculum Books, there are three types of school textbooks - government-designated books, authorised books, and approved books. Government-designated books literally mean the books published by the MoE or the government-designated institutions. But, the revised 2007 curriculum put the government-designated textbooks to an end with the intent of making and publishing creative and high quality textbooks through competition and autonomy. Authorised books are the books which get through the certification process successfully so as to be finally authorized by the MoE. The certification process consists of both a preliminary investigation where minor errors in the contents and expressions are checked and the main examination in which whether textbook candidates comply with the criteria of the national curriculum. If there is an exceptional situation where government-designated books and authorized books cannot be used, school head-teachers or publishers will be able to make their own textbooks and to require the government to approve the books as textbooks (approved books). The thing that should be mentioned here is that the MoE has an absolute control to publish school textbooks whatever the kinds of textbooks are. In comparison to other advanced liberal countries adopting free-publication system like England, France, Switzerland, Sweden, and Finland, South Korea has already

very complex and regulatory textbook certification processes (see Bang Ji-won, 2014 for a comparative research on the history textbook publication system). That is, any books should be examined thoroughly by the MoE and governmental institutions in the light of the national curriculum, in order to be authorized as textbooks. Given this, it does not seem reasonable that Gyohaksa Textbook in which a total of 479 errors were spotted in the certification process could be authorised finally as one of official history textbooks by the MoE in 2013 (Hankyoreh, 2013).

In order to introduce the new right's history textbooks into the school, a number of measures have been implemented. The MoE, for example, began to revise regulations and guidelines related to issuing history textbooks. In 2011, new standard for writing the history textbooks was made. The standard developed by the National Institute of Korean History is as below.

The development of school textbooks should be based on the spirit of the Constitution, in order to enhance the right view of history as well as the right national identity. Additionally, it should maintain educational neutrality politically, religiously, and socio-culturally, so as not to have bias against countries, nations, regions, religions, and cultures.

According to the MoE, the standards prioritise “historical facts and our constitutional spirit” (2011). Also, they are expected to “contribute not only to pupils taking great pride in our history but also to maintaining the sense of balance and accuracy in the contents of textbooks” (ibid.). The MoE repeats the arguments of the new right or the Textbook Forum (see the previous section). Plus, the

government took an action to strengthen the authority of the government by letting textbook publishers submit a memorandum including a promise that the publishers will sincerely implement the measures made by the MoE in the exercise of copyrights and issue rights (Kim Han-jong, 2014: 43). In addition to the pre-emptive measures, there was also an attempt to make those measures more effectively work in practice. In 2013, the MoE announced that Korean History will be one of the compulsory subjects of the national university entrance exam. The announcement was made right after president Park Geun-hye reprimanded the authorities for the situation in which “our students have many misunderstandings about our history”. Given the high interest of the general public and students in the national university entrance exam (see Ripley, 2013), the designation of Korean History as a mandatory subject for the national university entrance exam had an effect of exposing students to the new right’s historical perspectives.

In this context, the MoE finally authorised Gyohaksa Textbook on 30th of July 2013. However, it drew heavy criticism from academics as well as the public, because, as I mentioned earlier, there were too many errors in Gyohaksa Textbook. Then, the MoE suddenly organised the makeshift Committee for the Examination of Revision, and the committee carried out again a review of the entire textbook candidates in a couple of months. In the process of the review, the MoE insisted that how professional the committee is to investigate whether or not the textbooks are based on ‘objective’ facts, although the members of the committee were in secret. The problem of Gyohaksa Textbook was reduced to the problem of the certification process. And, more ‘neutral’ and ‘professional’ procedure was

introduced arbitrarily and secretly to solve the problem. This strategy is repeatedly used. The more the number of critiques increased, the more the government complicated the process of the certification. As Han Sang kwon argues, it was the abuse of discretion for the MoE to order a revision despite the existence of the National Institute of Korean History which already examined the textbooks three months ago (2015: 22). The MoE, however, warned that “if publishers do not comply with the amendment order of the government, they will face some harsh administrative measures such as suspension from textbook publication”. In the final stage of the additional certification process, the number of revisions that Gyohaksa Textbook received from the MoE was still 251 cases, which was 2-4 times higher than other textbook candidates. In response to the criticism over the number of errors of Gyohaksa Textbook, the MoE irresponsibly said that “it will be okay, if we request the publisher to correct the error before the textbook is finally published”. One could argue that it could not be a serious problem that a bit low quality textbooks can pass the certification process. As Kim Han-jong argues, “no-elimination principle in the process of textbook certification could be helpful and positive in the sense that it leaves room for diverse historical interpretations and schools can have an opportunity to choose textbooks among various certified textbooks” (2014: 43). But, he also stresses the necessity to establish independent systems or institutions to examine the elementary facts (ibid.).

I am in full agreement with the argument because Korean textbooks certification system is too regulatory. But, what I want to highlight here is the arbitrariness of the use of the certification processes for the authorisation of Gyohaksa Textbook.

Let me take one more example. The final version of Gyohaksa Textbook was different from the initial version that was passed in the certification process. Some revisions that the government requested the publisher of Gyohaksa Textbook were not reflected in the final version. This can be a clear reason for the cancellation of the publication according to Article 38 of the Regulations on the Curriculum Books. However, the MoE insisted that “the problematic version is just a sample version”. Yet, the certification mark was on the initial version textbook and the government already announced proudly that “the final version is the finally corrected version”. This reminds us of Schmitt’s argument that “all law is situational law” (cited in Agamben, 1998: 17). However, although Gyohaksa Textbook was recognised as one of official textbooks, schools met with strong opposition to the use of the textbook from teachers, students, and parents. And only a small number of schools decided to use the textbook¹⁹. President Park Geun-hye equated the failure of Gyohaksa Textbook with ideological attacks of the left, saying at the new year’s press conference in 2014 that “it is so regrettable that the history textbook issue is spreading as an ideological controversy”. She added that “students should learn with textbooks based on facts and balanced views” (Ohmynews, 2014a). Then, a few days later, the Minister of Education proclaimed that “the MoE will run Textbook Compilation Office in order to improve the quality of textbooks and curriculum” (MoE, 2014a). Again, the introduction of the new ‘professional’

¹⁹ In general, the selection of textbooks follows three steps. Firstly, teachers in charge review textbooks in the marketplace and nominate textbooks that will be used in schools. Then, secondly, ‘School Management Committee’, where students, parents, local personnel join the committee as members, review the teachers’ decision and forward the decision to the head-teacher. The head-teacher finally confirms which textbooks will be used in schools. *Hanmin* high school is the only school that make a decision to use *Gyohaksa Textbook* as of January 2014 (Media Today, 2004).

organisation for intervening in the publication or certification of school textbooks is a way to strengthen the control of the government. And, when such efforts ended in a failure as Gyohaksa Textbook was rarely selected in reality, the government eventually made a decision to monopolize the issue of textbooks in 2015.

4. THE ‘CORRECT’ HISTORY TEXTBOOK

It was during the military dictatorship in the 1970s that history textbooks were published by the state completely. The MoE reported to President Park Jung-hee on the Plan for the Publication of State-Published History Textbooks on 9th of June 1973. In the plan, it was suggested that the state-published history textbook is necessary to “rid a hitherto dependent view of history” and to “cultivate nationals of the future who are full of enthusiasm for independent national consciousness people” (MoE, 1973). The report was made under the emphasis of the President on the National Identity Education. Since liberation from the Japanese rule, school education has played a key role in the formation of Korean nationals devoting themselves to the nation, and history education, in particular, has served to raise the awareness of national values such as anti-communism. And, the tendency had reinforced with the military dictatorship monopolising the production and the publication of school textbooks. However, after the democratisation of 1987, state-published textbooks have been constantly criticised for monopolising interpretations of history and unilaterally imposing a single historical view. As Kim Han-jong states, “state-published textbooks are recognised as a consequence of the

dictatorship”, “to criticise the textbook is one of the democratisation movements in the field of education” (2015: 118). In 2007, state-published textbooks could no longer exist, along with the revision of the national curriculum highlighting ‘autonomy’ and ‘competition’. The below excerpt is part of “teaching and learning methods” in history education proposed in the 2007 national curriculum.

Rather than allowing pupils to study a given history in a passive way, history education should encourage pupils to critically reflect the formation of historical knowledge on their own. Also it helps pupils to understand different interpretations of historical events and to have critical awareness by themselves.

Despite the emphasis on “different interpretations of historical events” as above, the Prime Minister announced on 12th of October 2015 that there will be a change in the issue of history textbooks from the existing certification system to the state-published publication system in order to resolve the problem of “errors and bias”. The newly introduced history textbook is named the Correct History Textbook (hereafter referred to as Correct Textbook) (Prime Minister, 2015). Ahead of the announcement of the MoE, the leader of the ruling party claimed that “it is necessary to introduce new history textbooks with facts and neutral perspectives so that students are no longer confused by biased history education” (Kukmin-Ilbo, 2015). Criticism over the ‘bias’ of history textbooks and the focus on ‘neutral/objective’ view of history underlie much of assumptions of advocates of state-authored history textbooks.

There is an increasing criticism that people with biased views are writing the current abnormal history textbooks... We must

create a right history textbook that is faithful to the values of the Constitution and based on objective historical facts...

(Prime Minister, 2015)

The National Institute of Korean History is designated as a responsible institution for publishing history textbooks... We will make the right textbook based on the constitutional spirit and objective facts.

(Chairman of the National Institute of Korean History, 2015)

From now on, the Ministry of Education will strive to achieve balanced history education with objective facts by further improving the completeness of the state-authored history textbook.

(Vice-Minister of Education, Briefing, 2017)

The term ‘fact’ is the most oft-repeated word in explaining neutral and objective history textbook. In contrast to the 2007 national curriculum, we could no longer discover the mention about “different interpretations of historical events” in the national curriculum which was newly revised in 2015. ‘Historical fact’ and ‘past fact’ repeatedly appear instead.

The middle school curriculum focuses on establishing the basic skill and knowledge by learning historical facts, concepts, causality, and the relationship between the past and the present from past facts, so as to make it possible for students to learn more detailed historical facts in high schools.

However, unlike the government’s intention, the state-published textbook (Correct Textbook) has been highly criticised for several reasons. Most of all, it was not possible to select experts to write the history textbook, to make a tentative version

of the textbook, and to take a step of review and revision within one year. The quality of the history textbook was expected to be low even before the publication of Correct Textbook. In effect, according to the History Education Solidarity Council consisting of the National History Teachers' Association and the Korean Association of History Education, hundreds of basic errors and inadequate descriptions and biases were spotted in the final version of Correct Textbook that was issued on 31st of January 2017. The contents and perspectives of Correct Textbook are almost same as the Gyohaksa Textbook.

Many scholars and practitioners have argued that schools should be places in which “students interact with others who may see the world quite differently than they do” (McAvoy & Hess, 2013: 19; see also Chapter One). This is particularly important for “developing democratic dispositions in which people see each other as political equals, value other points of view, weigh evidence, and become more informed about the political issues they will confront in the public sphere” (ibid.). However, the introduction of the state-published history textbook itself exemplifies the working of war-politics where only ‘official’ perspectives are respected. In particular, the ways in which the government realises their plan to introduce the state-published history textbook are much more oppressive than before. The government treated an act of opposing the state-published textbook as a political activity particularly detrimental to students. As I showed in Chapter Four, the motifs of ‘political teachers’ and ‘immature students’ are used again as discursive justification. For instance, in response to teachers opposing the state-published history textbook, the government directed the local education offices to punish them

on the ground of the laws regarding educational neutrality. The MoE says that “we will take firm action against the situation in which educational neutrality is broken by teachers’ participation in public speeches against the government, signing campaign, and politically biased classes, which will be able to lead students to participate in protest about political issues so that students will be put in danger” (MoE, 2015a). The MoE went on to say that “it should be considered seriously that students are at important times of creating values, and such political actions will be able to cause psychological and emotional confusion” (ibid.).

One more thing that I want to point here is that the government’s restraints on political activity of teachers are discriminately applied to those who oppose the government’s policy. According to an official letter from the MoE to one local education office, the KTU’s Declaration for Anti-State-Published Korean History Textbook is defined as “violation of the political neutrality of teachers”, because it is to prevent major government policy decisions and enforcement with political intentions” (Ohmynews, 2016a). Yet, in the same letter, the MoE claims that public declarations made by Good Teacher Movement and 1,000 head-teachers and Teachers which support the government’s policy are understood as “the normal expressions that educators can make given healthy social common senses” (ibid.). Same declarations, but the MoE’s response is totally different²⁰. In such situation, the KTU executives who led the declaration were prosecuted and the MoE

²⁰ The MoE asserts that it is more important that the contents of declaration contain political bias than the declaration itself (MoE, 2015b). However, it is also arbitrary to distinguish which contents contain specific political bias or which are not politically biased.

requested the local education offices to take disciplinary actions against them (MoE, 2015b). However, many of the local education offices have been repelling and postponing the punishment. But, three teachers in Daegu, Gyeongbuk and Ulsan have been punished for their speeches against the government. These three regions are the places where conservative superintendents of education were elected (Pressian, 2016). In addition to direct punishment, teachers participating in the declaration were excluded from the selection of candidates for the award and overseas training project. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) sent a request to the government for correction of such discrimination (NHRC, 2017).

Despite the government's repression, the opposition to the state-authored history textbooks have not ceased. Then, the MoE suddenly announced a plan to run History Education Research Schools that test and use the state-published history textbook for the designated period. Any schools that wish to be designated as History Education Research School can be designated as a research school. But, as Gyohaksa Textbook was rarely chosen in reality, only one school applied for the research school. Only Moonmyeong High School located in Gyeongbuk Province applied for History Education Research School. Hong Taek-jung, the chairman of the school, is the president of the Gyeongsangbuk-do branch of the Korea Association of Private School Foundations. For historical reasons, private schools including private school foundations are in favour of the government. In effect, the Korea Association of Private School Foundations urged the government to make it possible for schools to use the state-authored history textbook (Kyunghyang, 2017c).

The shift from the old right to the new right appeared to signify the transition from the repressive rule to the neo-liberal rule. But, as I have illustrated so far, the war-political ‘dividing’ practice to exclude critical thought and action has not stopped working. In particular, Korean conservative forces are always ready to recourse to repressive sovereign power. The introduction of the state-published history textbook is the epitome of war-politics that forces the public to follow “statist universality” instead of thinking and acting critically (Foucault, 2003: 222). However, the new right’s attempt to regain its political hegemony ended in a failure. As soon as Moon Jae-in was elected as the new President in 2017, he abolished Correct Textbook. The below is part of the Report of the Special Rapporteur in the Field of Cultural Rights published by the United Nations (UN) warning of the risk of a single history textbook.

The accreditation of one single history textbook is problematic. This includes situations in which States aggressively promote one particular book through subsidies or by purchasing large quantities, thereby influencing selection by schools. Reducing the number of offered textbooks to only one must also be seen as a retrogressive trend. State-sponsored textbooks carry the risk of being highly politicized.

(UN, 2013: 17)

5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have traced the history of controversy over history textbooks after the early 2000s. It is important to keep in mind, however, that controversy over history textbooks does not arise in a vacuum or in a ‘purely’ educational way. This is why I began this chapter by examining the rise of the new right. The old right uses history and knowledge as weapons for regaining its lost hegemony. Especially, I have argued that the discourse of educational neutrality plays a role in making room for the new right’s intervention on history textbooks. Existing history textbooks are accused of being biased to the left, political, non-neutral, and thus detrimental to ‘vulnerable’ students. In this context, the new right insists on ‘neutral’ and ‘objective’ history textbooks and even introduces a single state-issued history textbook. But, as Harding says,

Political and social interests are not “add-ons” to an otherwise transcendental science that is inherently indifferent to human society; scientific beliefs, practices, institutions, histories, and problematics are constituted in and through contemporary political and social projects, and always have been. It would be far more startling to discover a kind of human knowledge-seeking whose products could-alone among all human products-defy historical “gravity” and fly off the earth, escaping entirely their historical location.

(Harding, 1991: 145)

In particular, what is at issue is the fact that there is no room in the new right’s history for historical struggles and conflicts. More generally speaking, there is no room in the new right’s positivist perspectives for “intellectual openness that celebrates diversity, welcomes dissent and rejoices in collective dedication to truth” (Hooks, 1994: 33). In this sense, I have argued that the new right’s persistence in

neutral school knowledge serves to the birth of the uncritical subject. Meanwhile, in order to put those plan into practice, the new right seems to depends on professionals and seemingly neutral administrative procedures. However, as I have illustrated in Sections Three and Four, they have made arbitrarily new procedures and policies no matter when they need, and eventually resorted to coercive means.

Now, I turn my attention to a matter of resistance. How do teachers and students resist conservative forces' attacks on 'non-neutral' critical education? What does it mean to be non-neutral under the war-political circumstances? What does it mean to be non-neutral with regards to education? What kinds of risks do teachers and students take to be non-neutral? Drawing on Foucault's discussions of the Greek word parrhesia, I try to answer to those questions in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN. PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE

Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power... There is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary. Instead there is a plurality of resistances.

(Foucault 1978a: 95-96)

Human existence cannot be silent nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Human beings are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection.

(Freire, 1993: 69)

1. INTRODUCTION

Critical scholars and educational practitioners have argued that education is political (see, in particular, Carr & Hartnett, 1996; Counts, 1932, Freire, 1970; 1985; Frith & Corrigan, 1977; Giroux, 2011). This is not only due to the significant influence of institutional politics on education, but also due to the fact that education serves to cultivate democratic values and attitudes, thereby contributing to the realization of democracy. In the case of South Korea, the role of education in

creating a democratic citizen and society is officially stated in Article 2 of Framework Act on Education.

Education shall aim at enabling every citizen to lead a life worthy of humankind and to contribute to the development of a democratic state and the realization of an ideal of human co-prosperity, by ensuring cultivation of character, development of abilities for independent life, and necessary qualities as a democratic citizen under the humanitarian ideal.

(Article 2 of Framework Act on Education)

Especially, in a number of critical literature on the relationship between education and politics, among other democratic and political virtues, the virtue of criticality and participation are highlighted (see Amsler, 2015; Dewey, 1916; Giroux, 1989; Shor, 1992; Smyth, 2011). Shor, for instance, insists that “all forms of education are political because they can enable or inhibit the questioning habits of students, thus developing or disabling their critical relation to knowledge, schooling, and society” (1992: 12-13). Both to “think critically” and to “act democratically” are indispensable to education (p.15). What I would like to show through previous chapters is the erosion of critical function of education. In the name of protecting educational neutrality, teachers’ participation in socio-political issues in various ways inside and outside schools has been considerably limited. In terms of school knowledge, there has been a growing claim that school textbooks, particularly history textbooks, should entail ‘positive’ and ‘unquestionable’ facts rather than throwing light on social, political, and historical controversies, conflicts, and struggles. As a conservative political structural force or strategy, war-politics, in particular, deploys diverse il/liberal power techniques in order to prevent education

from playing a role in creating a democratic citizen who is an active participant in socio-political issues with a critical awareness of social conditions. The terms such as “civic il/literacy” and “political il/literacy”, coined by Giroux (2016) and Freire (1985: 99-108) respectively, capture the deprivation of the critical function of education under the guise of neutral education.

Illiteracy no longer simply marks populations immersed in poverty with little access to quality education; nor does it only suggest the lack of proficient skills enabling people to read and write with a degree of understanding and fluency. More profoundly, illiteracy is also about what it means not to be able to act from a position of thoughtfulness, informed judgment, and critical agency. Illiteracy has become a form of political repression that discourages a culture of questioning, renders agency as an act of intervention inoperable, and restages power as a mode of domination... Any viable attempt at developing a radical politics must begin to address the role of education and civic literacy and what I have termed public pedagogy as central not only to politics itself but also to the creation of subjects capable of becoming individual and social agents willing to struggle against injustices and fight to reclaim and develop those institutions crucial to the functioning and promises of a substantive democracy.

(Giroux, 2016)

In this final chapter, I explore critical speech activities that were carried out by teachers and students in the course of the events that caused serious conflict between teachers/students and the state. In doing so, I examine what it means to resist the myth of neutral education in particular and war-politics in general. Foucault’s discussions of the Greek word *parrhesia* is useful in understanding the potential of speech in relation to “the art of not being governed so much” (Foucault, 1978b: 384). In the next section, I provide a summary of Foucault’s discussions of

parrhesia and examine the implications of parrhesia with regards to war-politics and neutral education. Then, in Sections Three and Four, I offer an examination of empirical cases of the use of parrhesia, that is, what teachers and students speak about at what moment and what kinds of risks they should take. But, I should mention here that there are some critiques of Foucault for the impossibility of resistance in his theory (see, for example, Hoy, 1986). The major criticism is that Foucault's work is devoted to detailed power analysis, where it is virtually impossible to find the space for resistance. For Said, "Foucault's imagination of power is largely with rather than against it" (original emphasis, 1986: 152). "Foucault's interest in domination was critical but not finally as contestatory, or as oppositional as on the surface it seems to be", says Said (ibid.). Similarly, Fraser points out the lack of "normative criteria for distinguishing acceptable from unacceptable forms of power" in Foucault's work (1989: 33). Without clear normative criteria or if "power is productive, ineliminable, and therefore normatively neutral", we cannot "distinguish better from worse sets of practices and forms of constraint" (p.32). Here, I cannot deal with and reply to all the critiques of Foucault. Instead, I would like to highlight that power and resistance are not a separate issue. More precisely, as I quoted at the outset, Foucault thinks that "resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" and "there is no single locus of great refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the revolutionary" (Foucault, 1978a: 95-96). But, "there is a plurality of resistances" (ibid.).

2. PARRHESIA, WAR-POLITICS, AND NEUTRAL EDUCATION

Let me begin with a brief summary of Foucault's discussions of parrhesia (see Chapter Two for more detailed explanation of parrhesia). In Foucault's account, parrhesia, which appeared for the first time in Greek literature from the end of the fifth century B.C., generally means the courage to tell the truth. Despite its relation to truth, parrhesia, however, involves neither disclosing the hitherto hidden truth nor seeking "pure knowledge" (Foucault, 2005: 77). Also, even though parrhesia can be defined as telling everything in an extremely broad sense, parrhesia in a "positive" sense is different from "rhetoric" or "chattering" in which "anyone can say anything" without consideration (Foucault, 2011: 10). Then, what does truth mean in parrhesia? Why does truth-telling, instead of truth itself, matter? And, why 'courageous' truth-telling? Let me answer these questions in turn very briefly. Central to truth in parrhesia is the relationship between belief and truth. Foucault (2001: 14) remarks that the "parrhesiastes (the one who uses parrhesia) says what is true because he knows that it is true". For Foucault, there are no certain evidential experiences and knowledge that inherently consist of truth. Instead, truth is achieved by an act of telling candidly what s/he believes. Frankness is one of the core factors of parrhesia. In addition, courage is suggested as a proof of the sincerity of the parrhesiastes, particularly given that truth-telling always takes place in asymmetrical relations (Foucault, 2001: 15). That is, in a parrhesiastic game, the parrhesiastes thinks of the existing truth regime and courageously takes the risk of telling her/his own truth, where s/he could become the subject who is not false to her/himself (p.17).

In parrhesia, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy.

(Foucault, 2001: 20)

Foucault, more specifically, offers an explanation of historically different forms of parrhesia. Parrhesia was initially regarded as the right of Athenian citizens or as a virtue of a wise ruler (the political parrhesia). There was a common belief that a democratic society could not work properly if citizens could not criticise a ruler's power. Conversely, if someone wants to be a wise ruler, he should protect the right of free speech or criticism. However, there is a possibility of parrhesia being misused by the worst citizens in a democratic society where everyone is entitled to speak freely. Here, who and how to use parrhesia properly become more important. Foucault is particularly interested in Socrates (the Socratic or philosophical parrhesia). In Plato's *Laches*, Socrates is described as the parrhesiastes who accords what he says with what he does. He also plays a parrhesiastic role in encouraging people to attend to what takes place in their thought and how they lead their lives (Foucault, 2001: 91-107). By tracing the history of parrhesia and linking it to a matter of 'the care of the self', Foucault discovers the possibility of the art of not being governed. Cynicism is taken as a radical example of parrhesia. According to Foucault, Cynicism makes a constant effort to reflect on the self, others, and im/possible modes of existence (2011: 310-312). Then, Cynicism "breaks totally and on every point with the traditional forms of existence, with the philosophical

existence that philosophers were accustomed to accepting, with their habits and conventions” (p.245). In doing so, the Cynic lead an “other” and “true” life (ibid.).

In this chapter, I would argue that parrhesia, the courage to tell the truth, can be a form of resistance to war-politics and neutral education. First, parrhesia as resistance to war-politics. The core logic of war-politics is a division between what can (friend) and cannot be said and done (enemy). Words and deeds in conflict with the existing social order or the state are considered to be beneficial to ‘enemy’ (North Korea), and they are punished. As Kim Dong-choon claims, people thus come to hesitate to express their critical or minority opinions under the Korean war-political situation in which unswerving loyalty is required (2013: 238). People feel that it is literally ‘safe’ to follow the mainstream and majority opinion. War-politics promotes and espouses the ‘culture of silence’. In this context, in order to speak publicly against the state, for example, someone should take the risk of being placed under the watchful eye of war-politics or being punished. However, whenever certain social and political issues arise, courageous speech activities have been made. The declaration of the state of affairs is the case in point. As democratic citizens, people intervene in the ‘present’ state of affairs by telling what they believe. In so doing, they disrupt war-politics that imposes silence, loyalty, and universality on people. Here, the declaration could and should not be reduced simply to a “formal and explicit statement or announcement”, as the dictionary defines (Oxford Dictionary). Instead, the declaration is active parrhesiastic resistance to war-politics.

Second, parrhesia as resistance to neutral education. When I say parrhesia in relation to war-politics, it is more to do with the political parrhesia, that is, the right to speak freely in a democratic society. The same is true for resistance to neutral education. In other words, resistance to neutral education is to oppose the war-political practice to draw an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able in the name of neutrality. For example, there have been teachers who, as educational professionals and democratic citizens, try not to hide behind neutrality and publicly express their thoughts on educational and social issues in spite of apparent risks or threats. But, I also would like to point to the link between the philosophical parrhesia and resistance to neutral education. Rejecting neutral education does not only mean saying like ‘we can speak freely what we believe as true’. But also, it is a critique of (neutral) education where the word and world (life) are separated. As I have demonstrated in previous chapters, the main goal of conservative forces’ neutralisation of education is the divorce of education from the world (society, politics, real-life experiences, and so on). In contrast to socially and politically ‘contaminated’ education, ‘pure’ and ‘objective’ education is seen as the ideal education (see Chapter Four). However, in opposition to neutral education based on a dichotomy between the educational (word) and the social or the political (world), there have been teachers and students who demand education that is “mediated by the world in order to name the world”, who try to live a life that accords their words and deeds, and who are willing to take the risk of being ‘non-neutral’ (Freire, 1970: 69). I would say that not only do they play a role as the parrhesiastes but also propose the philosophical parrhesia as an alternative educational form to neutral education.

To recap, parrhesia is the courage to tell the truth. But, it can function in different forms. In this chapter, I investigate ‘declarations’ made by teachers and students in the events that caused serious conflict between teachers/students and the state. The events include the establishment of the KTU (1989), the introduction of the national standardised testing (2008), the candlelight protest (2008-9), the illegalisation of the KTU (2013), and the introduction of the state-published history textbook (2015). In the course of these events, teachers and students were particularly asked to be neutral and silenced. Otherwise, they should face harsh punishment. Yet, in spite of the risk of being punished, there were teachers and students who were willing to speak publicly what they believe against the state and who were willing to claim ‘non-neutral’ education.

Being neutral politically in education is quite ambiguous. It is far from easy to explain what it means exactly. But, I just think that to be neutral means staying silent... It is not difficult to be neutral politically in education. Not difficult. However, to stay silent is really humiliating. I become really distressed when I cannot say what I want to say.

(an anonymous teacher, cited in CommuneBut, 2016a: 48)

3. TEACHERS’ PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE

Teachers’ union activities are the major target of repression of ‘non-neutral’ education (see Chapter Five). They are treated as political ‘incitements’, and teachers are asked to stay ‘neutral’ and focused only on their own ‘professional’

work (see also Chapter Four). However, the Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union (KTU) was organised in 1989 and legalized in 1999. In the Founding Manifesto of the KTU published on 28th of May 1989, KTU teachers criticize “dictatorial regimes that have trampled on autonomy and political neutrality of education” and, at the same time, confess that “teachers became knowledge-salespeople or university entrance exam technicians” (KTU, 1989). Then, they declare that “KTU teachers will be the central subject of education” and “KTU teachers themselves will be living examples of democracy for students who must be raised as democratic citizens” (ibid.). Given the situation in which the significant degree of punishment was foreseen by the state, the declaration of the KTU was not a simple notice. The declaration is a kind of parrhesiastic resistance. Above all, it is important to stress that the KTU interpellated itself as the subject of education through its own voice. Here it is helpful to see how Foucault distinguishes the parrhesiastes from other pseudo-parrhesiastes. Foucault classifies four types of truth-telling (2011: 15-25). First, the truth-telling of prophecy. The prophet is the one who tells the truth like the parrhesiastes. However, instead of speaking in his own name, the prophet transmits the word of God. Second, the truth-telling of wisdom. Unlike the prophet, the sage speaks in his own name. But he is not forced to speak, and what he speaks about is the being of the world and of things (a general principle of conduct). Third, the truth-telling of the teacher or the technician. The teacher, who possesses knowledge of *tekhnē*, has a certain duty to speak the truth. The teacher’s truth-telling, however, cannot be called parrhesia because it does not need to take a risk. Fourth, the parrhesiastic truth-telling. The parrhesiastes takes the risk of provoking war with others (unlike the teacher) by speaking clearly in his

own name (unlike the prophet) about the truth of what is in the singular form of individuals and situation (unlike the sage). As the parrhesiastes, KTU teachers spoke about themselves and their situations in their own words. They declared that they are democratic citizens and the subjects of education who raise democratic citizens, not “knowledge-salespeople” or “technicians”. However, in so doing, they began to be a clear target of repression. In effect, since the publication of the declaration, approximately 1,500 KTU teachers were arrested and dismissed (see Chapter Five for repression of the KTU). The declaration, the courageous speech activity carried out by KTU teachers, was a form of parrhesiastic resistance.

Despite the legalization of the KTU in 1999, it has not been allowed for the KTU to issue a declaration. In particular, to make the declaration of the state of affairs is treated as a collective political action. As well as the KTU, teachers are not allowed to publicly express their thoughts on social and political issues. The laws such as Article 66 of the State Public Officials Act and Article 3 of the Act On the Establishment, Operation, Etc., of Trade Unions for Teachers are invoked as grounds for imposing a restriction on the declaration. According to the laws, teachers and their trade unions “shall not be allowed to participate in any political activities”. Let me take one example. In 2008, there was a massive candlelight protest against the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between South Korea and the United States, particularly against the beef deal where the resumption of U.S. beef with possible risks of mad cow disease was approved (see Pang Hui-kyong, 2013 for more about the 2008 candlelight protest in South Korea). Although President Lee Myung-bak at the time apologised for failing to pay heed to the public concern

over health issues, the government and the prosecution, however, carried out an investigation into progressive people, media, and organisations that critiqued the agreement (MoneyToday, 2008). Thus, the KTU had required the freedom of press, assembly, human rights, and conscience by issuing the declarations of the state of affairs between 2008 and 2009. The below excerpt shows the typical response by conservative forces to the declaration. The title of the editorial is “the KTU’s Absurd Declaration”.

Yesterday, the KTU issued the declaration of the state of affairs that calls for a cabinet reshuffle, saying that “the buds of democracy is being brutally trampled”. It is a violation of the Act on the Establishment, Operation, Etc., of Trade Unions for Teachers which prohibits a political activity of teachers.

(Donga-Ilbo, 2009b)

A number of teachers who took part in the declarations should take administrative measures or disciplinary actions. The key members of the KTU were prosecuted and removed from teaching (Seoul, 2017). An education ministry official said that “it is unacceptable that the sacred education field is painted with political ideology. Strict countermeasures should be taken according to laws and principles” (Hankyoreh, 2009).

The declaration is treated as problematic for the state particularly when it is related to social and political issues. However, it also becomes problematic when teachers make a declaration of educational issues. As soon as Lee Myung-bak seized power in 2008, the national standardised testing, whose main purpose was to assess

scholastic ability of students, was reinstated in the name of the Zero Underachievement Students Plan. As a result, all elementary school students in third grade and sixth grade, all middle school students in third grade, all high school students in first grade should take the test, whereas only 3 percent of the sample students were originally supposed to take the test (Cha Sung-eun, 2008: 111). There has been increasing concerns for the test, mainly because the test is expected to strengthen the existing harsh competition between schools. In effect, as soon as the result of the test was published, local education authorities and school head teachers began to devote themselves to making students get better results in the following tests so as to enhance their schools' reputation. For example, the Okcheon Office of Education in Chungcheongbuk-do deliberately classified the students with low grades as students with special education need in order to exclude them from the test (Park Ok-ju, 2011:130). Also, the Imsil Office of Education in Jeollabuk-do initially reported that there were no academically underachieved students in the schools of the region, which turned out to be a complete fabrication (MoneyToday, 2009). There were widespread worries that both teachers and students become "evaluation machines" (Dahler-Larsen, 2012: 170). As a response to the nationwide uniform test, seven school teachers in Seoul made a decision to send a school newsletter to students and their parents, in order for students/parents to know the details about the test and to choose on their own whether to take the test or to go on a field trip alternatively. Here, the school newsletter was not merely a means to inform students/parents of some administrative matters. Instead, it involves publicly expressing what teachers believe and declaring that they are teachers who are professional and autonomous enough to think about the pros and cons of the test

with students and enough to educate in different ways. A teacher, who was dismissed due to sending the school letter, confessed as below.

I am a teacher. There is no doubt that teachers as the subject of education are able to speak about educational policies. When I ask myself again and again, I think the test is wrong. I can accept all the results and endure them, because all the children (students) are aware of my conscience and I do behave according to my conscience.

(cited in Kim Do-yun, 2008: 75)

In December 2008, seven teachers came to take severe disciplinary actions including removal from teaching, while one head-teacher, who allowed students' participation in the alternative field trip, was also suspended from his position for three months. To date, the number of teachers being punished for informing students about the right of choice between the test and alternative educational activity has increased as the national test has continued. Of course, it is not true that teachers who speak courageously always risk their life. There are less obvious risks that they face. For example, teachers joining the declaration were accused of "bringing dark clouds to schools" by their colleagues, which has to do with a very deep-seated conservatism of the South Korean teacher society (Hankyoreh, 2015a). In addition to colleagues' disapproving glance at disobedient teachers, some prejudices against the teachers' union such as "the KTU deliberately incites teachers to oppose to the test" or "the KTU is a huge barrier to the students' academic success, so they should be held to account for failing students" are operative. It should be noted here that the risks mentioned in the above are not

unpredictable. However, teachers and the teachers' union are willingly taking such risks.

Considering serious visible and invisible risks, it can be said that from a strategical point of view, courageous speech activities are not effective ways to resist war-politics and neutral education. However, I would like to highlight that to make a declaration is the only practical way to challenge power publicly given the South Korean context in which any teachers' industrial action including strike action is prohibited by Article 8 of the Act on the Establishment, Operation, Etc., of Trade Unions for Teachers. But, more fundamentally, it is important to stress that parrhesiastic resistance is nothing to do with the overthrow of the state, for instance. Rather it is more to do with a question of what kind of relationship we have with ourselves under the influence of power. It is the art of "voluntary inservitude" or the art of "reflective indocility" (Foucault, 1978b: 386). To borrow Rancière's words, teachers' critical and courageous speeches are understood as struggles to save themselves by their own efforts on their own account (1995: 45-52). The declaration which was issued by the KTU against the illegalization of the KTU can be taken as an example. The KTU was deprived of its legal status by the Ministry of Employment and Labor on 24th of October 2013 due to the fact that the KTU has repeatedly refused the government's claim that (nine) dismissed teachers cannot be union members. According to Article 2 of the Act on the Establishment, Operation, Etc., of Trade Unions for Teachers, only current teachers can join the union as a member, whereas there is no such provision in the KTU's own constitution. There have been significant efforts made by the KTU to change the

‘outdated’ law²¹ and the government’s decision, which ended in a failure. But, in the declaration issued on the very same day when the KTU received the government’s decision, the KTU highlighted that the illegalisation of the union is entirely of the KTU’s volition.

We choose a more uncomfortable way because we do not want to stay within the fence of law while alienating our dismissed colleagues.

(KTU, 2013)

Then, the KTU declared that “even though the government notified us that we are no longer the union, we notify us on our own that we are the most appropriate union.” Against the name of the law, the KTU resists by declaring what they believe as true in their own voices.

4. STUDENTS’ PARRHESIASTIC RESISTANCE

As I illustrated in Chapter Four, it is widely assumed that neutral education is inevitable owing to students who are easily affected by the external factors such as

²¹ There are internationally accepted standards for protecting the labourer’s right to organise. In International Labour Organization’s Convention concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (No.87), which was made in 1948, “workers’ and employers’ organisations shall have the right to draw up their constitutions and rules” (Article 3), “workers and employers shall have the right to join organisations of their own choosing” (Article 2), and “workers’ and employers’ organisations shall not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority” (Article 4). According to the survey by Education International (EI), except for South Korea, Madagascar is the only country where dismissed teachers are not allowed to join teachers’ unions, as of July 2015 (Hankyoreh, 2016).

politics. According to my preliminary research of newspapers, progressive newspapers also tend to have the same idea. That is, regardless of newspapers political inclinations, students are mostly depicted with modifiers like “naïve”, “sensitive”, and “immature” in the newspaper editorials that I gathered for the analysis (see Chapter Three for the data collection process).

Moreover, in contrast to university students, primary and secondary school students are much more sensitive and their judgement about objects is immature.

(Kyunghyang, 1991)

The reason why teachers’ political neutrality is stressed is because students, who are quite sensitive, are more likely to be affected by biased ideology than adults.

(Hankook-Ilbo, 2003)

If a teacher is preoccupied with a certain ideology and spreads it like a demagogue, unfledged students will be able to live in their life with a jaundiced view of life.

(Kookmin-Ilbo, 2011)

Students do not exist as subjects in the discourse of educational neutrality or in neutral education. Instead, they are the ones who should be ‘protected’ (see Chapter Four for the discourse of immature students). This is the point at which students’ courageous speech activity is directed. Through speaking about their issues in their own words, students become the subject of education. Central to Foucault’s account of parrhesia is the way in which human beings become the subject who is not false to oneself by means of the act of telling.

Rather than analyzing the forms by which a discourse is recognized as true, this would involve analyzing the form in which, in his act of telling the truth, the individual constitutes himself and is constituted by others as a subject of a discourse of truth, the form in which he presents himself to himself and to others as someone who tells the truth, the form of the subject telling the truth.

(Foucault, 2011: 3)

The motif of the student as the subject of education not the object of education lies in many of declarations made by students. Let me take the introduction of the national standardised testing as an example again. As well as teachers, students resisted the national standardised testing since 2008, where the problem of the students' right to say and to act emerged repeatedly. For example, a student says in an interview with the media that

We (Students) have not been listened to so far, but we have the right to say as well as to act against education which makes us unhappy.

(a student, cited in MBC, 2008).

On 31st of March 2009, there was another national standardised test a year after the first one, where another declaration was also issued by students. The main focus of the declaration, which was entitled No More Death, is students as the subject of education who can and should engage in their educational issues in their own words and ways. The declaration criticises the situation in which too many students commit suicide due to poor test results, but students cannot say and do anything.

Adolescents are not a machine for study. Adolescents are not a machine for the test. Adolescents are not the ones who just receive education. Now, we fairly and squarely speak of our own rights that have been ignored and buried.

(Students Against the Terrible National Standardised Test,
2009)

Students' demands for their right to say and act is to raise the problem of the political parrhesia. A student who played a key role in issuing a declaration against the introduction of the state-published history textbook (2015), says that "schools should be places in which democracy should be taught and proved. It is absurd to ask us only to be neutral. As a citizen in a democratic society, I can speak, and the state should listen to various voices." (cited in Ohmynews, 2016b). For students, to speak is to exist. Derrida help us to see the subjectification function of the declaration. In his explanation of declarations of independence, Derrida argues that the people in the declaration do not exist as an entity before the declaration (1986: 10). As the signature invents the signer, the declaration serves to give birth to free and independent subject (ibid.). Building on Austin and Derrida, Kenny (2010: 33-34) also defines the declaration as below.

The declaration is a discrete instant of free, independent, linguistic doing, which, by virtue of successfully creating a political object and/or entity, constitutes-explicitly or implicitly, for the first time or anew- the sovereign subject and the discursive space that enables us to refer to him as such.

(Kenny, 2010: 33-34)

However, I would like to extend the students' speech activity into the introduction of the parrhesiastic or, in the words of Rancière, "emancipatory" ethos into

education. Let me remind the role that Socrates plays as the philosophical parrhesiastes. What Socrates does is not the demonstration of the truth to some else. Instead, “Socrates dialogue shows the role of a teacher is to reawaken a search for knowledge in the context of one’s life” (Moghtader, 2016: 79). He encourages people to get out of a status of stultitia, that is, a disconnection between the will and the self (Foucault, 2005: 133). To do so, more importantly, Socrates regards himself as an un-knower and thus a listener. His dialogue is not for instructing people but for listening and helping them to take care of themselves. I think that the Socratic parrhesia lets us think of a ground upon which more emancipatory educational practices between speaking subjects can occur. Rancière’s account of emancipatory education is particularly useful in understanding the relationship between speaking subjects and emancipatory education. According to Rancière, education is “the verification of the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being” (Rancière, 1992: 59). For Rancière, there is no such thing as the great master or teacher who transmits the truth to the student. Instead the essential is that

He is speaking to them, and they are listening to him; that they are speaking to him and he hears them. He speaks to them about legs and arms and stomachs, and that’s perhaps not very flattering. But what he imparts to them is their equality as speaking beings, their capacity to understand as soon as they recognize themselves as equally marked by the sign of intelligence... He speaks to them as men, and, in so doing, makes them into men: this derives from intellectual emancipation.

(Rancière, 1991: 97)

The discourse of educational neutrality urges teachers to teach students ‘objectively’ only about ‘scientific’ issues. Here, as Freire argues, “education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor” (1970: 53). Neutral education also assumes the hierarchical relationship between teachers and students or between different kinds of knowledges, where students are subjected to superior teachers and superior scientific knowledge. Consequently, they are not treated as speaking subjects. By contrast, the philosophical/Socratic parrhesiastes and emancipatory theorists put an emphasis on the encounter between the will of speaking beings and another will (Rancière, 1991: 13). In the light of this, students’ parrhesiastic speeches cannot not be confined to reclaiming the right to speak. They also can be read as the efforts to transform neutral education based on the arbitrary dichotomy between the educationally right and the educationally wrong into emancipatory education where everyone can equally say words which are not emptied of their concreteness. To put it differently, as the perceptibility of the self and freedom to act are the point of departure for all parrhesiastic practices, to declare that students are the subject who can say and act is thus equally to declare they can construct their knowledge and truth over themselves and others and thus they can act voluntarily.

Although this students’ action is often described in the media as taking place at the instigation of teachers or parental organisations, we make sure that all students taking part in the protest against the national standardised testing join the protest voluntarily, in opposition to the government’s unfair education policy.

(Juvenile Declaration Against the Extremely Competitive Education and the Nationwide Test, 2008)

5. CONCLUSION

In comparison to previous chapters concerning the ways in which critical thought and action are threatened by discursive and non-discursive practices of war-politics in the name of educational neutrality, this chapter, more optimistically, offers an explanation of how both teachers and students challenge war-politics and neutral education. I have focused in particular on their will to speak. Under the Korean war-political context in which a critique of power is considered to be beneficial to enemy (North Korea), there is a risk in speaking publicly and critically against power or the state. In the field of education, the discourse of educational neutrality serves the consolidation of the arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able. Both war-politics and the discourse of educational neutrality force teachers and students to be neutral and silenced.

However, despite the risk of losing their job, for example, teachers have not given up speaking publicly and critically about social and political issues. Students also have resisted the idea of ‘immature’ students through speaking in their own words about their own issues. I have tried to understand those speech activities through the lens of parrhesia. Parrhesia can be defined succinctly as the courage to tell the truth. However, it is irrelevant to figuring out what is true or false. Rather, it is more to do with “criticism” (Foucault, 2001: 17-18). Ball excellently captures the critical characteristic of parrhesia as below.

Parrhesia involves speaking boldly in the face of speaker and listener, speaking plainly when there is a difference in power between the speaker and listener, speaking frankly even when it flies in the face of the prevailing discourses and common sense... The parrhesiates [sic] are also exemplars, and they do not aim to persuade but to tell. Their speech is not assertion but refusal and critique, a confrontation of the normative with the ethical-a challenge to the normalizing truths of the grey sciences. Foucault values truth-telling as an agonistic practice not a normative one.

(Ball, 2017: 67)

Not only do teachers' and students' parrhesiastic speeches resist war-politics where an old saying "speech is silver, silence is golden" is working, but also suggest an alternative to neutral education where there is a clear separation between the educational and the social or the political. In relation to the latter, I would like to highlight two things. First, parrhesiastic speeches imply that education should bring life, words, and deeds together in a harmonious way. Second, in order to bring them together, teachers and students are all treated equally as speaking subjects. Education does not take place between those who possess neutral, scientific, objective knowledge but take place when the will of speaking subjects meet another will on the basis of equality as a proof of equality, as Rancière argues (1991).

CHAPTER EIGHT. CONCLUSION

I became interested in the use of the concept of educational neutrality after the Sewol ferry accident. I wondered whether it is too non-neutral to wear yellow ribbons at schools as a symbol to mourn the victims of the tragedy. Three years after the accident, some schools still prohibit teachers' and students' attempt to understand the socio-political implications of the accident while reducing it to the matter of safety. I wondered by whom and how the concept of educational neutrality has been used in reality (South Korea). It was by no means difficult to see that neutral education is the language of conservative forces. Conservative politicians, media, and scholars insist on neutral education on a daily basis. This dissertation has sought to explain the conservative use of educational neutrality in South Korea. However, I want to make explicit that the goal of the thesis is not to judge what is neutral and non-neutral education in a 'purely' neutral way. Rather, I have paid special attention to why and how conservative forces utilise the concept of educational neutrality and what its effects are. In this concluding chapter, I map out key arguments put forward in previous chapters and discuss their theoretical and practical implications.

In Chapter One, I picked out some specific issues as to the use of educational neutrality in South Korea. First, political neutrality of education is a key part of much debate about educational neutrality in South Korea. The reason why political neutrality of education matters in South Korea is due to the fact that education has long been a political instrument. However, despite the democratisation of 1987,

political neutrality of education has been a constant source of controversy. Above all, conservative forces endeavour to make education neutral via various interventions in non-neutral education. Second, the Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union (KTU) is treated as the main troublemaker with regards to educational neutrality. The KTU was established in 1989 and legalised in 1999. But, most union activities have been deemed political and non-neutral. Finally, there have been increased demands for neutral school knowledge. Whenever controversial issues are brought into schools, conservative forces raise the problem of political neutrality of education. There have been only a few studies of the Korean use of educational neutrality, most of which lack systematic and well-grounded theoretical considerations. Thus, more generally and theoretically, I examined not only the liberal defence of educational neutrality but also critical pedagogy's opposition to neutral education. I agree with critical pedagogy about the impossibility and undesirability of neutral education. However, many critical pedagogues tend to neglect the practical use of educational neutrality. In this study, I have located the conservative use of educational neutrality within the broader social and political context.

In Chapter Two, I contextualised the conservative use of educational neutrality in relation to war-politics. War-politics, which is conceptualised by Kim Dong-choon, is the conservative forces' dominant political strategy to divide 'friend' (South Korea, capitalism, the right) from 'enemy' (North Korea, socialism or communism, the left) and punish enemy in the name of protecting society. War-politics has been intensified since the Korean War (1950-1953). I particularly highlighted that it is

not just political adversaries that become the target of war-politics. But also, critical thought and action are considered to be beneficial to enemy. Then how does war-politics work? Kim Dong-choon places an emphasis on the role of repressive state apparatus. However, war-politics modifies its strategies to work effectively along with other social structural changes such as the neo-liberal transition (1997). I used Foucault's work on state racism, governmentality, and parrhesia as a tool with which to examine the dynamics of war-politics and the possibility of resistance to war-politics.

In Chapter Three, I presented the methods with which to examine the relationship between the crisis of critical thought and action under the war-political circumstances and the discourse of educational neutrality. Above all, I suggested that the problem of educational neutrality can be seen as a discursive phenomenon bound up with social and political practices. This is related to the ambiguity of the concept of educational neutrality. For the term neutrality is highly vague, those who make the use of educational neutrality cannot avoid identifying the term. And language use plays a crucial role in the identification process of educational neutrality. It is also important to stress that discourse of educational neutrality always has a mutual relationship with non-discursive practices. Governmental agencies, media, laws, and social groups are important factors in the working of the discourse of educational neutrality. In order to analyse discursive and non-discursive practices of educational neutrality, I combined Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) with genealogy. CDA is suitable for this study because it sees discourse not as a mere linguistic unit but as social practice. As I argued in Chapter

Two, the use of educational neutrality is closely related to war-politics as a socio-political structure and a mixture of power strategies. Foucault's genealogical approach help me to critically and historically examine the role of non-discursive elements (power) in the realisation of the discourse of educational neutrality.

In Chapter Four, I analysed the editorials collected from a conservative newspaper (the Donga-Ilbo). I particularly focused on the structure of the selected editorials ("what elements or episodes are combined in what ways?"). Basically, I could see that the matter of educational neutrality in South Korea revolves around the KTU and school knowledge. There are also some editorials about the election of the superintendent of education. More specifically, the selected editorials tend to take neutral education for granted without any specific explanation. Although there are many theoretical and practical issues about educational neutrality, the editorials argue for neutral education and justify their argument on the basis of the laws stipulating educational neutrality in a highly abstract sense. Instead, critical engagement in social and political issues or critical perspectives on history or society are the major objects of the editorials' criticism. Those thoughts and acts are described as 'non-neutral', 'leftist', and 'political'. In addition, according to the editorials, the reasons why educational neutrality is required is because students are 'immature' and 'vulnerable' to biased views and incitements. The contamination metaphor is also widely used with the intention of bringing about a sense of fear and thus calling for strong measures against non-neutral education.

To repeat, as an organised critical force, the KTU is at the centre of controversy over educational neutrality. In Chapter Five, I investigated the process of the KTU being neutralised through and with the discourse of educational neutrality. It is a bit ironic that it was critical teachers and their unions who demanded neutral education first. The KTU and the Korean Federation of Teachers Union (KFTU), the forerunner of the KTU, commonly required a ‘real’ protection of educational neutrality. But, both unions were severely suppressed by the state because their union activities were seen as political and non-neutral. As soon as the KTU was established in 1989, the government labelled the KTU as a leftist political incitement and even a ‘social evil’ and mobilised the repressive state apparatus to incapacitate the union. About 15,000 teachers who were involved in the KTU were expelled from schools. The introduction of both the security test and the oral test was also a means by which to screen out critical teachers in a less oppressive way. Would-be teachers’ experiences of democratisation movements and the involvement in the KTU became grounds for disqualification. After destroying the KTU by means of judicial action and dismissal threats, power took the critical act itself as the next target. The 5.31 Education Reform has resulted in the diminution of critical thought and action. As part of the state’s globalisation project, the reform has made teachers think and act individually. Collectivism is the enemy of neo-liberalism as well as war-politics.

In Chapter Six, I traced the history of controversy over history textbooks. How to teach controversial issues such as war, politics, and religion in a neutral way at schools is one of the crucial issues of educational neutrality. But, it should be

acknowledged that in South Korea, the problem of non/neutral history textbooks arose in a political way. Especially, I insisted that history and knowledge have been used by the new right as a way to regain conservative forces' lost hegemony since the early 2000s. The new right has accused existing history textbooks of being biased to the left and non-neutral. Instead, with an emphasis on positivism, the new right has insisted on 'objective' knowledge and history. This can be understood as an attempt to re-discover and re-focus on conservative forces' glorious history and thus gain their political legitimacy or hegemony. However, what I want to particularly highlight is the exclusion of controversy, struggles, conflicts, and all the social 'messy' things from history textbooks. They are regarded as 'dangerous' to the war-political society where statist universality is considered to be crucial. In order to introduce the new right's history textbooks into schools, seemingly neutral but arbitrary and makeshift administrative procedures were used. As a last resort, the conservative government decided to adopt the state-published history textbook in 2015. This event is the epitome of the working of war-politics that forces the public to follow statist universality instead of thinking and acting critically.

In Chapter Seven, I paid special attention to a matter of resistance to neutral education. By drawing on Foucault's work on parrhesia, I explored critical speech activities carried out by teachers and students. Parrhesia means speaking courageously in the face of danger or risk. In the Korean war-political climate that brooks no criticism and opposition, in order to speak publicly and critically against power, someone should take the risk of being punished in many ways. However, teachers and students are willing to speak publicly and critically about their issues

in their voices. In so doing, they introduce a break in war-politics that draws an arbitrary line between what is and what is not say-able and do-able. Also their critical and courageous speech activities let us think of an alternative to neutral education where words, deeds, and worlds are separated. That is, we can imagine more emancipatory education where the will of speaking subjects meet another will on the basis of equality as a proof of equality.

This study presented here is one of the first investigations to explore the practical use of educational neutrality. As I examined in Chapter One, there have been studies of the concept of educational neutrality. However, those studies tend to concentrate on theoretical discussions rather than empirical analyses. To be more specific, within the tradition of liberalism, educational neutrality is reduced to a purely educational issue. Critical pedagogues also tend to ignore the influence of the discourse of neutral education, while assuming a priori the impossibility of educational neutrality. By contrast, this thesis provided an important opportunity to advance the understanding of educational neutrality by exploring how the concept of educational neutrality is used in practice.

In addition, this work will generate fresh insight into how liberal and illiberal power work together. The existing Foucauldian analyses of power have emphasised ‘productive’ aspects of power. However, in this study, I have demonstrated that Korean conservative forces do not simply adopt and use neo-liberal power techniques but articulate them to illiberal power techniques, that is, war-political repressive strategies. Conversely, it is hoped that this research will contribute to a

deeper understanding of war-politics. War-politics is not an age-old relic that is not working any longer. Despite the democratic and neo-liberal turn of Korean society, the logic of war permeates the whole society. There are numerous variants of the division between enemy and friend. And they work not only in an oppressive way but also in a liberal way.

Lastly, I would like to mention the implications of the study for future research. Throughout the study, I have demonstrated the crisis of critical, political, democratic, and emancipatory education. Instead of enhancing teachers' and students' capacity to critically understand, to democratically engage with, and to actively transform their everyday lives including socio-political surroundings, neutral education tends to limit the role of education to transmitting scientifically neutral knowledge from teachers to students. Neutral education is another version of what Freire calls "banking education" (Freire, 1970). Thus, critical educationalists including myself are required to ponder the possibility of critical, political, democratic, and emancipatory education. I do not mean to say that there is a 'good' education and let's select it. I do not mean to say that we need to teach students about the parliamentary system. Rather, as Rancière argues, on the basis of equality and as the practice of equality, we should endeavour to bring into the field of education different and marginalized lives, voices, needs, and so on (Ranciere, 1991).

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